

A new THE
Mystery of FAITH

Opened up:

Or some SERMONS

concerning Faith (two where-
of were not formerly Printed.)

Wherein the Nature, Excellency,
and Usefulness of that noble grace is
much cleared, and the practice
thereof most powerfully pressed.

Whereunto are added other three Sermons,
two concerning the *Great Salvation*, one
of these not formerly Printed, and
a third concerning *DEATH*.

By Mr. *ANDREW GRAY*, late Minister
of the Gospel in *Glasgow*.

All these SERMONS being now carefully
Revised, and much Corrected.


*John 3. 18. He that believeth not is condemned
already, because he hath not believed in the
Name of the only begotten Son of God.*

EDINBURGH:

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Ann^o DOM. 1678.



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Christian Reader.

Amongst many weighty and soul piercing sentences that you wil find in these following Sermons, this is one, That the professors of this age, whether they go to Heaven or Hell, they will be the greatest debtors that shall be in either place : the one to the free Grace of God, and the other to his Justice. And certainly if we speak of these in this time, whose blessed lot it shall be to inherit the Kingdom, they cannot but acknowledge themselves indebted to his love, above all that have gone before them, for washing them from such ugly pollutions, as this generation hath been defiled with, for bringing them through so great tribulations, preserving them in the midst of so great tentations, and dangerous snares, as have encompassed them ; yea, and still keeping in the light before them, notwithstanding of so many blasts (if we may so speak) from all the four winds of Hell to blow it out. And on the other hand, if we shall speak of these who in this generation shall perish, assuredly their debt unto Divine Justice must be exceeding great, above all who are gone down to the pit before them, because the roll of their mercies are found to have been many cubits longer, and many cubits broader, than theirs who lived in the preceeding ages : and the great things that the Lord hath wrought in our days, have born a greater testimony

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against the wickedness, hardness and atheism of this time, than many former. But above all, the great measure of Gospel-light that he hath no less plentifully offered then wonderfully preserved to this generation, beyond all our Ancestors; hath undoubtedly made the sin of these who shall utterly reject their own mercy, so out of measure sinful, and their unbelief so exceedingly inexcusable, that their guilt must needs justify Chorazin and Bethsaida, or Sodom and Gomorah in that day when every man shall give account of himself to God. And amongst the many preaching witnesses that (alas we are afraid) shall compear in that day against many yet living in their pleasures, and dead while they live: This now glorified Author cannot but be one; whose testimony must be very condemning, especially to the vain, loose, negligent and time-wasting youth in this age. For when he was first drawn to the ministry, he was but a youth indeed, scarce twenty years compleat; far within that age, that by the constitutions of this Church (except in case of more then common abilities, which indeed he had) is required for entering to that great and holy calling; And for the space of two years after (which was all the time that the Church enjoyed his Labour, he was helped to press the Truths and Threatnings of God so home upon the Consciences of his hearers, that as it was observed of him, by one of his most Learned and pious Colleagues Mr. Durham who is now in glory with him) he did many times cause the hair of their head to stand up: The Lord not only hereby verifying his word, that he can take the weak things of the world to confound the strong, and out of the mouth of Babes can perfect his own praise, but designing also (as would seem of purpose) to send a Boy out of the School for a reprob of the sluggishness of his People, that thereby the aged might be the more ashamed, and the younger more afraid: No

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Whether do we think that this was all, but truly when we consider what measure of Graces, Gifts, and experiences the Lord did bestow upon so young a person, and then with what humility, self-denial, gravity, prudence, diligence, authority, and moderation he was helped to manage these Talents during that short time of his Ministry: It may be justly conceived that the Lord brought him forth to be a great conviction even to many of us in the Ministry who came into our Masters vineyard long before him, and will go out behind him: And indeed to us it looketh somewhat like the Lords taking up of the little Child and setting him amongst the midst of his contending Disciples in these times, that even they who would be greatest amongst us, might be least, and see somewhat of their own weakness.

As to this little Piece, whatever ye shall find in it, it hath this to say for it self, that whereas many writings in the world, do intrude themselves upon the Press; yet this the Press hath violently thrust into the world: For some young student from his good affection to the edification of the Lords People, and (no doubt) from his high esteem of the precious Author his memory, having given in to the Press, a Copy of some of these Sermons, being only Notes taken from his mouth when he preached them, no sooner were they seen abroad, but all the Presses in the Nation fell a labouring about them, so that (if we mistake not) in less then two or three moneths time, three or four Impressions were cast off, yet all of them so imperfect and maimed, that howbeit the excellency of the matter and the fresh remembrance of the worthy Author, his name made them very sweet to many (especially those who had heard him preach) yet the unsuitable dress wherein they appeared, and their mistakes of the first writers (they being hardly able to take up every thing as it was spoken) occasioning diverse material failings in the sense, besides

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better faults, could not but be a trouble to those who are acquainted not only with the singular graces, but partly also of the eminent Youth. This gave occasion to some friends to speak a little what may these prejudices, which both the truth and the Authors Name might ly under, by these incorrect impressions might be taken off. And finding that the Copy, which by providence, the worthy young Gentlewoman, who was his wife, had lying by her though it was but Notes taken from his mouth, yet was the most correct that could be found: And that it all did contain the whole purposes that he had preached upon these Texts; Yea, the whole purposes concerning Faith that he had Preached, according to that method purposed in the first of the Sermons formerly published. This was undertaken to be revised by some who albe though none of the fittest for these employments, yet rather or nothing should be done in the business, were content to bestow some hours upon it according as other necessary employments would permit. And now having sought out all the notes of these Sermons which we could find from other hands, and compared them with the Copy above mentioned, we do again present them to the people, not with any confidence that our pains hath put any effect upon them; only we have some hopes the whole subject being now before them, and these things in the way of expression helped, which either might seem to be somewhat unpleasant, or lyable to mistakes, they shall now be less edifying nor less acceptable then formerly they were. We did not think fit to make any considerable alterations as to the method, or other things of that kind, lest haply by straining his excellent purpose too much, to shape them to the ordinary rules, or to reduce them to that order which might have pleased ourselves, we should have wronged the matter it self, and least have put them to a loss who did hear him preach and it may be now upon their reading things in the

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same order as they heard them, will be the more readily brought under the impressions of that liveliness, power and weight which (it may be) formerly they felt upon their hearts when he was speaking.

If the method do not altogether satisfie some spirits, or the explication seem not so full; or if they find some introductions which possibly lead not in so close, or seem not so suitable to the subject of the Sermons; or haply now and then there be some little digressions from the main purpose, we shall desire that this may not at all be constructed to be the Authors ignorance of rules and method, or his want of abilities in humane learning, it being well known to those who were best acquainted with him, that he indeed had a scholastick spirit, and was in reading far beyond his age and opportunities for studying; but as to all these we shall intreat you rather to consider, 1. His age, and that his gift was but in the very moulding and breaking (as we speak) in the point of order and method, when the Lord was pleased to call him home from his work. 2. That every man hath his proper gift of God, who in his great wisdom, and certainly for the good of his Church, doth so order, that there is somewhat singular and peculiar almost in every mans way, as to these things. 3. For any thing we know he had never that high esteem of this, or any other of his labours, as to design any of them for publick view; and these are but Notes taken from his mouth. 4. We are perswaded he studied more his hearers then himself. Ye will easily perceive, when ye have but read a little, that he hath been a man of a very zealous temper; that the great busines of his spirit, and that which he did wholly spend himself about, was to make peoole know their dangerous condition by nature, and by all means to perswade them to believe and lay hold upon the great salvation: And truly, that a

And indeed, though
and worthy to
yet for a Minister of
Gospel, in all discourses, and upon all occasions,
please your purpose to such a method; and insist in
such a measure of explications and criticisms up
words, it is but to fatter himself, and to starve his pe
ple. 4. Consider the dulness of the most part of the hear
ers in this age, and how hard a thing it is to awake
a sleeping world, and to get them but to think that
which concern them to bear in earnest, and possibly to be
not a small piece of spiritual wisdom in him (and
maybe not unfit to be imitate by others) and begin
red all his Sermons with an awakening word concern
ing Heaven, or Hell, or Judgement, and the danger
of abusing the evil, and refusing the good. 5. For di
gessions, the truth is, that his soul was so filled with
such longings after Heaven and Glory, and so inflamed
with the love of Christ, especially towards the latter is
of his race, that when he fell on those subjects, upon which
(ye will see) most of these digressions are, he could not
well contain himself, nor easily bring off his own spirit
A thing not unusual to the Saints in Scripture: and
howbeit such things might seem somewhat singular. (in
the time) and not so coherent; yet now we have ground
to apprehend, that they were often strong influences of
the Lords Spirit, stirring up a lamp as it were, into
sudden blaze, that was not to burn long in his Church.
But now we shall detain you no longer, only this we
may assure you of, that though these Sermons are nei
ther so exact, nor so full, as doubtless they would have
been, if they had come from the Authors own pen; yet
we dare say, they were studied with prayer, preached
with power, and backed with success; so also, if ye shall
read them with consideration, meditate with prayer
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and practise with diligence, ye shall neither find your time nor pains ill bestowed; but shall have cause to bless the Lord for this, amongst other helps, that he hath given for making you meet for the inheritance of the Saints in light. That it may be blest to their end, is the earnest desire and prayer of your servants in the work of the Lord,

**R. o. Trail,
Jo. Sterling.**

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The Mystery of FAITH Opened up.

SERMON I.

1 Joh. 3. 23. *This is his Commandment, that ye should believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ, &c.*

THis everlasting Gospel (in which there are drawn so many precious draughts & divine lineaments of the transcendent beauty of a crucified Saviour, and of the riches of his unsearchable grace) is a most precious and excellent thing, not only because it doth contain most absolute and sublime precepts and commands, in the exercise and obedience of which, we do not only attain unto the highest pitch in holiness, but likewise, because it containeth most rich and precious promises, in the possession & fruition of which we are advanced to the highest pinnacle of eternal blessedness, this is clear in the grace of Faith; for what doth more purifie the heart, and stamp it with the Image of the invisible God then this grace of Faith? And what richer promises are annexed to any duty, then to this duty of believing, to wit, everlasting life, and fruition of God. So that if we have dwelt forty days at the foot of Mount Sinai, and had been under the greatest discovering and condemning power of the Law, we may yet come with boldness to mount Sion, and there im-
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brace Jesus Christ, who is the end of the Law for righteousness to such as believe; Upon which Mount he standeth holding forth the golden Scepter of his peace, desiring us to embrace him, and is crying out that word in *Isa. 65. 1.* *Behold me, behold me.* O may we not summon Angels, and these twenty four Elders about the Throne, to help us to wonder that ever such a command as this came forth, that we should believe on the name of the Son of God, after that we had broken that first and primitive command, *That we should not eat of the forbidden tree!* Was not this indeed to make mercy rejoyce over judgment? And O may we not wonder at the precious oath of the everlasting Covenant whereby he hath sworn, *That he delighteth not in the death of sinners?* What (suppose ye) were poor *Adams* thoughts when at first the Doctrine of Free-grace and of a crucified Christ Jesus a Saviour, was preached unto him in Paradise? What a divine surprisal was this that heaven should have preached peace to earth after that earth had proclaimed war against heaven? Was not this a low step of condescendency, to behold an offended God preaching Peace and good will to a guilty sinner? What could self-destroying *Adam* think of these morning and first discoveries of this everlasting Covenant? Christ, as it were, in the morning of time giving vent to that infinite love which was resting in his bosom & precious heart, before the foundation of the world was laid. We know not whether the infiniteness of his love, the eternitie of his love, or the freedom of it, maketh up the greatest wonder; But sure, these three joyned together make up a matchless and everlasting wonder. Would any of you ask the Question, What is Christ worth? We could give no answer so suitable as this, it is above all the Arithmetick of all the Angels in hea-

and all the men on earth, to calculate his worth. Men here must be put to a divine non-plus, this is *Jobs* divinity, *Job* 8. 13. *Man knoweth not the price of wisdom*, and must not Jesus Christ who is the precious object of Faith, and wisdom of the Father, be a supereminent and excellent One, who hath that Name of *King of kings, and Lord of lords* not only engraven on his vesture, (which pointeth out the conspicuousness of his Majesty) but even also upon his thigh, to point out that in all his goings and motions, he proveth himself to be higher than the Kings of the earth? And howbeit the naked proposing of the object doth not convert, yet if once our souls were admitted to behold such a sight as Christ in his Beauty and Majesty, and to be satisfied with the divine rays of his transcendent glory, then certainly we should find a blessed necessity laid upon us of *glorifying* with him; for Christ hath a sword proceeding out of his precious mouth, by which he doth subvert and subjugate his own to himself, as well as he hath a sword girded upon his thigh, by which he smudgeth and maketh war with his enemies. We confess it is not only hard, but simply impossible, to commend him a Hyperbole in commending of him; His worth being always so far above our expressions, and our expressions always so far beneath his worth, therefore we may be put to propose that desire unto him, *Exalt thy self, O Lord, above the Heavens.*

But now to our purpose, being at this time to be in our discourse upon that radical and precious grace of Faith, we intend to speak of it under this twofold notion and consideration; First, We shall speak of it as it is justifying, or as it doth lay hold upon the righteousness of a crucified Saviour, making application of the precious promises in the Covenant of free grace, which we call justifying Faith. And in the second

cond place, we shall speak a little unto Faith, a
 doth lay hold upon Christs strength, for advancing
 work of mortification, and doth discover the person
 excellencies of Jesus Christ, by which we advance
 the work of holiness and divine conformity with God
 which we call sanctifying Faith. However, it is
 to be supposed, that these are different habits
 Faith, but different acts flowing from the same
 ing habit laying hold and exercising themselves
 on Christ in different respects, and for diverse ends.
 Now to speak upon the first, we have made choice
 these words. The Apostle John in the former ver
 hath been pointing out the precious advantages
 the grace of obedience, & of keeping his commands
 that such a one hath, as it were, an arbitrary power
 with God, and doth receive many precious returns
 of prayer: As likewise, that one who is exercised
 the grace of repentance, is Gods delight: which is
 cluded in this, that he doth these things which
 wel-pleasing in his sight. And now in these words
 doth as it were, answer an objection that might
 proposed, about the impossibility of attaining the
 precious advantages, seeing his commands were
 large, and that hardly could they be remembered.
 This he doth sweetly answer, by setting down in
 one verse a short compend or breviary both of Law
 and Gospel, viz. *That we should love one another*, which
 is the compend of the Law: and, *That we should
 believe on the Name of His Son*; which is the compend
 the Gospel. And by this he sheweth the Christian
 that there are not many things required of him,
 attaining these excellent advantages; but if he ex
 cise himself in the obedience of these two comp
 hensive commandments, he shall find favour both
 with God and men. And as concerning this precious
 grace of Faith; We have, 1. the advantages of it

ed in the words, and clear also from the scope, as
 o doubt) all the commands have infinit advantages
 folded in their bosom, which redounds to a Belie-
 r, by his practising of them. And, 2. the excellency
 it holden forth in the words, in that it is called,
his command, as if he had no other command but
 this. (And the Greek particle is here prefixed, which
 with a great deal of emphasis and force in it, *Καὶ*
τὸ ἐς τὴν ἡ ἐντυλὴν αὐτῷ) But, 3. There is this also,
 the absolute necessity of this grace, holden forth here
 in this word, *His Commandment*; as if he would have
 said, by proposing of this command, I do set life and
 death before you, and that ye would not conceive
 that it is an arbitrary and indifferent thing for you
 to believe, or not: But be perswaded of this, that as
 an infinite advantage may constrain you to the obe-
 dience of it, so absolute necessity must perswade you
 to act that which is of your everlasting concernment.
 And lastly, Ye have the precious Object upon which
 Faith (which is justifying) doth exercise it self, and
 that is upon the Name of the Son of God; And (no
 doubt) Faith is that excellent grace, which doth e-
 levate the soul unto a sweet and inseparable union
 with Christ: and is that golden and precious knot,
 that doth eternally knit the hearts of these precious
 friends together. Faith is that grace that draweth
 the first draughts of Christs precious Image on our
 hearts, & by love doth accomplish and perfite them.
 Now Faith taketh hold not only on the faithfulness
 of God, that he is a God of truth, and that in him
 there is no lie: but likewise it taketh hold on the
 omnipotency of God, that he is one to whom nothing
 is too hard: and on the infinite mercy and love of
 God, that he is one who doth delight to magnifie this
 Attribute above all his works. And these are the three
 great pillars of justifying Faith. From the first, it an-
 swereth

swereth all these objections of sense, which do ordinarily cry forth, *Doth his promise fail for evermore*. And that with this one word, *If he hath once purposed it, he will also do it, and if he hath once spoken it, he will also make it come to pass.* From the second answereth all these objections that may arise from carnal reason and probability, which tend to weakening of his confidence. And these do oftentimes cry out, *How can these things be?* But Faith laying hold upon the omnipotency of God, it stingers not at the promise, but is strong in the Faith, giving glory to God. And it is the noble and divine exercise of this Heroick grace of Faith, that these objections of reason and probability, which it cannot answer, it will lay them aside, and yet close with the promise; which was the practice of believing *Abraham*, who considered not his own body being weak nor the barrenness of *Sarahs* womb. As likewise was the commendable practice of that woman *Matth. 15.* who not being able to answer the second trial of her Faith from reason, yet notwithstanding Faith made her cry out, *Have mercy upon me, O Son of David.* And from the last a christian doth answer the arguments of misbelief which do arise from the convictions of our unworthiness & sinfulness, which makes us oftentimes embrace that divinity of *Peter* *Luk. 5.8.* *Depart from me, for I am a sinful man.* But Faith taking hold on the infinite mercy and love of Christ, it answereth all with this, He walks not with us according to that rule of merit, but according to that precious and golden rule of love and boundless compassion.

But before we shall speak any thing unto you of these things, we would a little point out some few things to be known as previous to these; we shall not dwell long in pointing out the nature of justifying Faith

It is that grace whereby a Christian, being
 convinced of his lost estate, and of an unpossibility
 to save himself, he doth flee to the refuge
 of Jesus Christ, and unto him who is the
 City of refuge, and there doth abide till
 his Priest shall die, which shall not be for ever.
 We will, it is a sweet travelling of the
 soul betwixt infinite misery, and infinite mercy,
 betwixt an utter impossibility to save our selves, and
 a compleat ability in him to save to the uttermost
 betwixt a bounding sin, and superabounding grace.
 Since Faith is often holden forth to us in
 order that notion of coming, Isa. 55. 1. Ho every
 one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters. Joh. 4. 14.
 Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.
 Therefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost
 that come to God by him. Add what is said
 by, that if once a sinner could be brought to
 know all his own deformities, he would never
 believe that a man is really righteous, or
 imputed righteousness, and it were by his
 holiness; surely such an one were not far from the
 Kingdom of God. Neither shall we stand long
 to point out this unto you, that it is your duty to
 believe; for it is clear, not only from this place,
 likewise from Isa. 45. 22. Look unto me, and be saved,
 of all the ends of the earth. Mat. 11. 28. Come unto me, all ye
 that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you
 rest. Joh. 14. 1. Ye believe in God, believe also in me.
 55. 1. Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the
 waters, and he that hath no money, come buy wine
 without money and without price. But oh! it is a
 misery of many (and that which may be a
 perpetual lamentation) that we can neither be
 brought to the Law, as commanding to obey it, or
 brought to believe it: Nor to the Gospel, as pro-

missing to embrace it, and sweetly to receive it. O but that primitive temptation and delusion whereby Satan did deceive our first father, is that whereby he yet seeks to catch and delude many souls, *viz.* That though we eat of the forbidden fruit, and walk in the vain imaginations of our own hearts, yet he doth suggest this to us, that we shall not die, but shall once be as God; this is Satans great and deluding Divinity: And therefore to inforce this great and precious command a little further, we shall propose these considerations.

First, That the Gospel hath laid no obstruction in our way of closing with Christ, and partaking of the effects of the Gospel; but on the contrary, sheweth that the great impediment is our want of willingness which we lay in our own way, as is clear from *John 5. 40. Ye will not come to me that ye may get life;* as likewise from *Revel. 22. 17. Where the Gates of the Gospel are cast open, and whosoever will, are commanded to enter in:* So that although you may father your misbelief upon your inability or that your spot is not the spot of his people, yet know that the rise and original of it is want of willingness. But to make this more clear, we would have you all knowing this, that all the qualifications annexed to this commandment of Faith, as that in *Matth. 11. 28.* speaketh out the qualifications rather of these that will come, then of all these that ought to come: Or he inviteth these that through the spirit of discouragement and misbelief, have the greatest reluctancy to come, and may not that cardinal and soul-refreshing promise, *John 6. 37.* stop the mouth of misbelief, so that it should have nothing to say? *He that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out:* ye may reduce your misbelief rather to the sinfulness of your will, then to the sinfulness of your walk, and

if once ye could come the length of willingness to embrace Jesus Christ, all other objections and knots should be sweetly loosed and dissolved.

Secondly, Consider that though we should pray the one half of our time, and weep the other, yet if we want this noble grace of Faith, the wrath of God shall abide on us. What are all the works of these hypocrites, and these glittering acts of Law-sanctification, but a plunging of our selves in the ditch, until our own cloaths abhor us? Therefore it is, that after the Prophet *Zachary* hath made mention in the twelfth Chapter of his Prophecie, of making bitter lamentation for him whom we have pierced, as for an only Son, yet in the beginning of the 13. Chap. he maketh mention of a Fountain opened to the house of David for sin and for uncleanness; which may intimate unto us, that although we have wash't our selves with our own tears, yet there is use of the blood of Christ, and that we must be washed in that fountain even from our own righteousness which are but as filthy rags.

Thirdly, Consider that great and monstrous sinfulness that is in this sin of unbelief; we will strain at a gnat, but many will easily swallow down this Camel: We will tithe mint and annise, and fast twice in the week, but neglect faith, and love, and judgment, which are the weightier things of the Law. And indeed there are these things which speak out the sinfulness of unbelief, 1. That when the holy Ghost is sent to convince the world of sin, *John. 16. 9.* He pitched upon this sin, as though there were no other sin of which the world had need to be convinced, *He wil convince the world of sin, because they believe not on the son of God:* and no doubt there is more sinfulness in that sin, then in many breaches of the Moral Law, it being a sin against matchless love, and against

against that which is the remedy of sin. 2. That it is called by way of eminency, disobedience, as is clear from *Heb. 4. 11. Lest any of you fall after the same example of unbelief*; or as the word may be rendered, *lest any of you fall after that example of disobedience*, *Eph. 3. 3.* That amongst all these that shall be eternally excommunicate from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, those that are guilty of this sin of unbelief, they are put in the first place *Rev. 21. 8.* And, 4. That unbelief doth contradict and deny these three precious and cardinal attributes of God. 1. Doth not unbelief contradict his faithfulness, and make him a liar? *1 Joh. 5. 1.* 2. Doth it not contradict the infiniteness of his power? And, 3. the infiniteness of his love, and supposeth that there is something too hard for him which his power cannot reach, nor his infinite love overcome? We may reduce many of our questions and disputings of his good will to this original, *viz.* to the disputing of his power. No doubt if we belong to him, we shall once sing that note of lamentation over our unbelief; *This is our infirmity, for changes are from the right hand of the most High.*

And lastly, to enforce this precious command of Faith, consider that it is his command which speaketh forth this, that we must not take an indulgence or dispensation to our selves to believe, or not to believe at our pleasure: and is it not a strange thing that Christians are less convinced of the breaches of the commandments of Faith, then of other commands? They think misbelief to be but a *Zoar*, a little sin; and it proceedeth either from this, that the convictions of other sins (as the neglect of prayer or the sin of swearing, or committing adultery) do arise from a natural conscience; for there is somewhat of natures light to make us abominate and hate

ate them: when yet the light of nature will not lead us to the convictions of the sinfulness of misbelief, it being a Gospel and more spiritual sin. Or proceedeth from this, that unbelief doth ordinarily pass veiled under the vizard of some refined vertue, as humility and tenderness, though that rather it may be said, that it is pride and ignorance, cloathed with the garments of humility. And no doubt, Christ doth account obedience to this commandment of Faith, the greatest act of humility, as is clear from Rom. 10. 3. where it is called submission; they submitted not to the righteousness of God. Or else it proceedeth from this, that we conceive that the commandment of Faith is not of so large extent as other commands, and so doth not bind us to the obedience of it; but know this, that it shal be the condemnation of the world, that they have not believed on the Name of the Son of God; and no doubt but it is Satan's great design and cardinal project, to keep us back from obedience to the commandment of Faith, and that we should not listen to the precious promises of this everlasting Gospel, but should reject the counsel of God against our selves, and refuse his precious and divine call.

The second previous consideration that we would give, shall be to show you what are the causes that there is so much disputing of our interest, and so little believing; that we are unstable as water, marbling our own excellency, spending so much of our time in walking under a cloud, and are so seldom admitted to read our names in these precious and eternal records of Heaven? No doubt these things have influence upon it, viz. 1. That we are more judging of God by his dispensations, then by his word, supposing ever the change of his dispensations to speak forth the change of our state; this is misbelief's Divinity.

Divinity. That when ſenſe cannot read love in face, but he appeareth to frown, and to caſt a cloud over it, then it is preſumption (ſaith ſenſe) to read love in his heart, or in his Word; but know it was ſelf-denying practice of believing *Job* to cry out *Though he ſhould kill me, I will believe in him*; therefore make not diſpenſations your Bible; otherwiſe ye will ſtumble at the noon-tide of the day and ſhall halt in your way; knew you never what ſuch a thing as this meant, to aſcend in overcoming thoughts of his love, notwithstanding any thing that his diſpenſations might preach? We conceive, that if the eyes of our faith were opened, we might ſee infinite love engraven on the darkeſt acts and moſt diſſembling diſpenſations of his to us, though it be oftentimes written in dark and dim characters offered

2. There is this likewise which hath influence upon our ſo much diſputing and miſbelieving, viz. a guilty conſcience, and the intertainment of ſome predominant luſt, which oftentimes occaſioneth our walking in darkneſs and having no light: This is clear from *1 Tim. 2. 19.* where that precious jewel of Faith can be holden in no other place but in a pure conſcience, that is that royal Place wherein it muſt dwell; And no doubt, if once we make ſhipwreck of a good conſcience, we will err concerning our faith. A boſom Idol when it is intertained, doth exceedingly mar the vigorous exerciſe of theſe graces, which are evidences of our faith; and certainly, grace ratiſied in its degrees, then in its ſincerity or ſimple beſt only is that which giveth the clear evidence of faith. Therefore when we find not love in its high and eminent actings, we hardly win to make it a clearly concludiſg demonſtration of our Faith.

3. As likewise, a boſom Idol, when it is entertained, maketh us to loſe much of our high eſteem and reputation

reputation of Jesus Christ; which doth exceedingly interrupt the sweet and precious workings of Faith. For it is certain, that if once the immortal soul be united to Jesus Christ by the bond of love and respect, then our Faith will increase with the increase of God. Our intertainment of a bosom idol is ordinarily punished with the want of the sensible intimations of his grace, and of our interest in him: so that sometimes his own are constrained to cry out, *God hath departed from me, and he answereth me not neither by dreams nor visions.*

4. There is that likewise that hath influence upon it, our not closing absolutely with Jesus Christ, but upon conditions and suppositions. We make not an absolute and blank resignation of our selves over unto Christ, to hold fast the covenant, notwithstanding he should dispense both bitter & sad things unto us; but we conceive that Christs Covenant with believers, is like that Covenant that God made with Noah, that there should be Summer and Winter, Time of seed time & harvest, night and day unto a Christian. A Christian must have his night as well as his day: he must once sow in tears, before he reap in joy: he must once go forth, bearing his precious seed, before he can return bearing his sheaves in his bosom: and that this hath influence upon our instability, may be seen from this, that often a Christian after his first closing with Christ, he meeteth with desertion in point of tenderness, in point of joy, and in point of strength, so that his corruption seems now to be awaked more then formerly, that he wants those seeming enjoyments of him which formerly he had: & that much of his softness of heart hath now vanished, which is clear somewhat from Heb. 10, 32. *and after they were enlightened, they endured a great fight of afflictions.* For the word that is there rendred afflictions, signifieth inward

opened up.

en our sloathfulnesse in the exercise of our spiri-
al duties, by which Faith should be entertained:
ith is a tender grace, and a plant that must not
ruffled, but nourished through the sap of other pre-
ous graces; but we grow remisse in our spiritual
ties; and do turn our selves upon the bed of se-
rity, as the door upon the hinges. And doth not
r drowfinesse cloath us with rags, and make us fall
o a deep sleep: while as if we were diligent, *our
s should be made fat and rich?* Yea, sloathfulness
th not only impede assurance in this, that it hinder-
the divine communications of his love and respect
which assurance may be kept in life, *Cant. 5. 2. but
it maketh our poverty come on us as an armed man,
our want as one that travelleth.* And withall it let-
loose the chain by which our corruptions are tyed
maketh them to lift up their head, by which our
ranchise is much darkned & impaired, and our hope
much converted into diffidence and despair. And
would only say this, it is the diligent Christian that
he believing Christian; and it is the believing
Christian that is the diligent Christian: there being
a sweet reciprocation betwixt these two precious
ces, that they die and live together.

Now thirdly, we shall shut up our discourse with
in pointing out a little, what are those things
do obstruct a Christians closing with Christ, and
living in his precious Name.

We conceive that this woful evl doth spring and
from that fundamental ignorance of this truth,
there is a God, as is clear from *Heb. 11. 6.* Where
is required as a qualification of a Comer, *That he
d believe that God is.* And assuredly, till once this
ous truth be imprinted upon our souls,
of *How and Point of* we will be upon
sloathfulnesse, and a dawning hope
shovans

to teach unstable souls who know not the way to attain unto real blessedness. And truly it is a fault many, that they begin to dispute their being in Christ before they know there is a Christ: and to dispute their interest in him before they believe his being, and that there is such an one as is called Christ.

II. Our coming unto Christ is obstructed from want of the real and spiritual convictions of our desperate and lost estate without Jesus Christ, and that our unspeakable misery is the want of him; which is clear from *Jer. 2. 31. We are lords, we will come more to thee.* And it is evident from *Rev. 3. 16,* that such a delusion as this doth overtake many, that they can reign as Kings without Jesus Christ; that they can build their happiness, and establish their eternal felicity upon another foundation. But, O that we could once win to this, to believe what we need without Christ, and to believe what we shall be without the enjoyment of him: with the one eye to descend and look upon these deep draughts that the mystery of iniquity have imprinted upon our immortal souls, and withall to reflect upon the wages of sin, which is death, and be constrained to cry out, *Wo is me, I am undone:* And with the other eye, to ascend and look to that help that is laid upon One that is mighty, and to make use of the righteousness of a crucified Saviour, that so what we want in our selves, we may get it abundantly made up in him.

III. There is this likewise that obstructeth our closing with Christ, our too much addictedness to the pleasures and carnal delights of a passing world, which is clear from *Luke 14. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. 22. 5, 6.* where those that are invited to come to the feast of this Gospel, they do make their Apology, and with one consent do refuse it, some pretending an impossibility to come, and some pretending

unavoid

avoidable inconveniency in coming. And, O! what a ridiculous thing is that poor complement, that these deluded sinners used to Christ, *I pray you give us excused?* And is not the world the great plea and argument that they make use of, when they will not come and make use of Christ.

IV. There is this lastly, which doth obstruct ones coming to Christ, their unwillingness to be denied their own righteousness, which is clear from *Rom. 7. 23.* and we conceive, if once these two were believed (which are the great Tropicks, out of which all these arguments may be brought to perswade you to embrace Christ) to wit, the infinite excellency of his person on whom we are to believe, & the infinite loss that those do sustain who shall be eternally rejected of him. We might be perswaded to entertain a divine abstractedness, & holy retirement from all things that are here below, & to pitch our desires alone upon him, who is the everlasting wonder of Angels, and the glory of the higher house. O! did we once suppose the unspeakable happiness of these whose Faith is now advanced unto everlasting felicity and fruition, and hath entred into that eternal possession of the promises, might we not be constrained to cry out, *It is good for us once to be here?* Christ weepeth to us in the Law, but we do not lament; and he pipeth to us in the Gospel, but we do not dance: he is willing to draw us *with the words of men, and with the bonds of love, and yet we will not have him to reign over us.* May not Angels laugh at our folly, that we should so undervalue this Prince of love, and should condemn him who is holden in so high esteem and reverence in these two great assemblies that are above of Angels, and of the spirits of just men made perfect? Christ hath now given us the first and second summonds, the day is approaching when the sad and woful summonds shall be sent a-

gainst us, of departing from him into these ever
ing flames, out of which there is no redemption:
 this shall be the capstone of our misery, that we
 once life in offer, but did refuse it: And tho
 there were four gates standing open toward the No
 by which we might have entered into that everlast
 rest, yet we choosed rather to *walk in the paths*
lead down to death, and take hold of the chambers of
 O! but there are many that think the Gospel cunning
 ly devised fables and foolishness, (they being unwill
 ing to believe that which sense cannot comprehend
 nor reason reach) and this is the reason why the G
 pel is not imbraced, but is rejected as an humane
 vention, and as a morning dream, &c.

S E R M O N II.

I John 3. 23. *This is his commandment, that
 should believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Ch
 &c.*

THere are three great and cardinal mysterie
 the unfolding of which, all a Christians
 ought to be spent, First, there is that precious
 and everlasting mysterie of Christs love and com
 scendency: which those intellectuall Spirits, the
 gels, are not able fully to comprehend. Second
 there is that woful mystery of the desperate decei
 ners and wickednesse of the heart, which no man
 ever yet able to fathom & comprehend. And third
 there is that precious mystery of that eternal fel
 and blessednesse that is purchased unto the Sa
 that once they shall reign with Christ, not a thou
 years only, but throughout all the ages of everlasting
 endless eternity: so that there is this difference bet
 this Garden of everlasting delights, that Christ
 purch

urchased to the Saints, and that first Paradise, and
 den wherein man was placed. There was a secret gate
 the first, thorow which a man that had once enter-
 in, might go out again. But in the second and pre-
 ous *Eden*, there is no access for going out, and all that
 to be known of these three mysteries is much com-
 ehended in this, to know that they cannot fully be
 own. *Paul* was a blessed proficient in the study of
 e first mystery, and had almost attained to the high-
 class of knowledge, and yet he is constrained to
 ofess himself to be ignorant of this, Hence is that
 ord, *Eph. 3. 19. That ye may know the love of Christ*
which passeth knowledge. And is it not a mysterious
 mmand, to desire people to know that which can-
 be known? The meaning whereof we conceive to
 this in part, that *Paul* pressed this upon them, that
 ey should study to know that this mystery of Christs
 e could not be known. *Jeremiah* was a blessed
 proficient in the knowledge and study of the second
 stery; he had some morning and twi-light disco-
 ies of that; and yet thought in some measure he had
 homed that deep, yet he is constrained to cry out,
 p. 17. verse 9. *The heart is deceitfull above all things,*
desperately wicked, who can know it? And indeed,
 which *Solomon* saith of Kings, *Prov. 25. 3.* may
 be said of all men, in this respect: *The heavens*
height, and the earth for depth, and the heart of
man, is unsearchable. The Apostle *Paul* also was a
 led proficient in the study of the third mystery,
 ing some morning and twi-light discoveries of the
 mised rest, & was once caught up to the third hea-
 s, and yet when he is beginning to speak of it,
 or. 2. 9. he declareth all men to be ignorant of the
 owledge of this profound mystery of mans blessed-
 e, and cryeth out, *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard,*
neither have entred into the heart of man, the things

which God hath prepared for them that love
 And if there be any thing further to be known
 these mysteries, the grace of Faith is found won
 among all the graces of the Spirit, *to open the*
seals of these great depths of God. Is not the grace
 Faith that whereby a Christian doth take up the
 visible excellency and vertue of a dying Christ
 not Faith that precious grace, by which a Christian
 must take up the spots and blemishes that are within
 himself? And is not the grace of Faith, that precious
 grace that placeth a Christian upon the top of mount
Pisga, and there letteth him see a sight of the promi
 sed land; and doth open a door in heaven, through
 which a Christian is admitted to see Christ sit
 upon his Throne? And faith hath not only a kind of
 Omnipotency, as is clear, *that all things are possible*
him that believeth, but it hath a kind of Omniscience
 & all-knowledge, that it can take up and comprehend
 all the greatest mysteries of Heaven, according to the
 word, *Prov. 28. 5. He that seeketh the Lord shall understand*
all things: As if he had said, there is nothing
 dark to a believing Christian, as there is nothing
 possible to a believing Christian. As likewise Faith is
 that grace that must take aside the vail, that is spread
 over the face of a crucified Christ: and Faith is
 that precious Spy that goeth forth, and taketh up
 wonderful excellencies that are in him. The grace of
 Love, as it were, is born blind, and it hath no way
 wherewith to solace it self, but that which is pro
 ced unto it by this noble and excellent grace of Faith

Now, before we shall speak any thing to
 things that we did propose to speak of at the
 occasion: we shall yet speak a little unto some things
 which are necessary to be known, for the discov
 ering up-taking of the nature of justifying Faith; which
 the great commandment of this everlasting God

and that which we would first speak to, shall be this. That is the reason and ground that the Gospel-conveyance of righteousness and life, (and of the excellent things of this everlasting Covenant) should be through the exercise of the grace of Faith? For it is said in the Scripture that repentance justifieth, that love justifieth, or that mortification justifieth; but it is Faith only that justifieth, and it is faith by which a Christian inheriteth the promises, so that is clear, that Faith is that conduit pype, through which is conveyed to us the great blessings of this everlasting Covenant.

I. And the first ground of it is this, it is through Faith, that all our blessings may be known to be by love, and by free and unsearchable grace; as is clear, Rom. 4. While the Apostle is giving a reason why the inheritance is conveyed to a Christian through Faith; *as of Faith* (saith he) *that it might be of grace*: for if the inheritance were conveyed to a Christian through a Covenant of Works, then these spotless thoughts of infinite love, and of unsearchable grace, could not be written on our inheritance, as is clear, Rom. 4. 25. And it is that great design of Christ, to make his grace conspicuous in conveying salvation to us through Faith.

II. There is this second ground likewise of it, that all the promises and blessings of this everlasting Covenant might be sure and steadfast to us, therefore they are conveyed to us through the exercise of the grace of Faith; as is clear, Rom. 4. 16. *They are of Faith* (saith he) *that they may be sure*; or as the word is, *that they might be settled*, when the promises of life and eternal salvation were conveyed to us through mans obedience, were they not then most uncertain and unstable. But is not Heaven your everlasting crown now steadfast unto you, seeing you have that golden

pillar of Christs everlasting righteousness to be the foundation of your faith, and the strength of confidence in the day of need?

III. There is this third ground why the promise and excellent things of this Gospel are conveyed to the Christian through the exercise of Faith, all boasting and gloriation might be excluded, according to the word, *Rom. 3. 27. By what law is boasting excluded? Not by the law of works, but by the Law of Faith.* And certainly, seeing Christians have all the good things of heaven conveyed to them through the exercise of Faith; think ye not, that this shall be the first song when ye shall be within the gates of that Jerusalem? *Not unto us not unto us, but unto whom doth belong the glory of our salvation.* O what a precious dignity were it, but for one half hour to be permitted to hear these spotlesse songs that are sung by these thousand times ten thousand, and thousand thousands of holy Angels, that are round about the Throne? Doth not *David* that sweet singer of Israel now sing more sweetly nor he did while he was here below? Doth not deserted *Heman* now chant forth the praises and everlasting songs of him that sitteth upon the Throne? And doth not afflicted *Job* now sing sweetly after his captivity reduced, and he entereth within that land, where the voice of joy and gladness is continually heard: Would ye have a description of heaven? I could not give it no term so suitable as that Heaven is a rest without a rest for though there remains a rest for the righteous, yet *Rev. 4. 8. These beasts that stand before the Throne, they rest not, nor day, crying, holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty; yet there is much divine quietness in that holy unquietnesse that is above.*

IV. There is this last ground, why the blessing of the Gospel, and life and righteousness are conveyed

us through the exercise of Faith, that the way to obtain to these things might be pleasant and easie, We are certainly perswaded that the way of winning to heaven by a covenant of works, was much more unpleasant and difficult; but it is not an easie way of *striving into the Holy of Holies*, to win into it through the exercise of Faith. *Are not all wisdoms wayes pleasantness? Are not all her paths peace?* Was not that just self-denial in one that said, he would not take up a crown though it were lying at his foot. But, oh! that cursed self-denial doth possess the breasts of many, so that though that Crown of immortal glory and eternal blessedness be lying at your feet, yet ye will not embrace it, not take it up: Is not the hatred of many to Christ covered with deceit? And therefore *our iniquitie shal be declared before the Congregation.* Now that what we have spoken upon this, might be more clear, and that the nature of justifying Faith be not mistaken, we would have you taking notice of these things.

I. That the grace of Faith doth not justify a Christian, as it is a work, or because of any inherent excellency and dignity that is in this grace above any other graces of the Spirit; but faith doth alone justify a Christian, instrumentally, and objectively; that it is that by which a Christian is just, by laying hold on the precious object of it, the righteousness of Christ, And to clear this, we would only have you knowing this that faith doth justify as it cloeth with Christ: but not because it closes with Christ, which some vainly are bold to assert; because there is not any dignity or worth in the act of Faith in closing with Christ, that can be the foundation of our justification, else it were to confound that precious delect of free grace.

2. There is this that we would have you all knowing;

That Faith is not the instrument of Justification (Justification is taken in an active sense,) though it is the instrument of Justification, as it is taken in a Passive sense : and the ground of this conclusion is this, because it is impossible that any action in the world can be an instrument of any action in God : therefore that phrase that you have so ordinarily spoken of, *That Faith justifieth*, it is thus to be solved, *That we are justified by Faith*.

3. There is this that we would have you know that betwixt a Christians closing by Faith with the righteousness of Jesus Christ and the justification of a sinner, I say, there is no natural and indispensable connexion betwixt these two : but only there is a connexion of divine appointment, and of free grace though we conceive there is a natural aptitude in the grace of Faith, to lay hold on the righteousness of Christ, more then there is in any other grace of the Holy Spirit, as ye may see there is a more natural aptitude and fitness in the hand to receive then in any other organ of the body.

4. There is this also that we would have you knowing, that a Christian in his first closing with Christ, Christ (considered as crucified) is the immediate object of his Faith, and not Christ considered in his personal excellencies. Hence it is often said in Scripture, that Christ as crucified, is holden forth as the immediate object of justifying Faith ; as is clear, *Rom. 3. 5, 24, 25*. And the ground of this assertion is this, because that it is the formal object of justifying Faith, which doth formally justify a sinner ; and on which Faith doth immediately lay hold as a ransom to satisfy justice, and as a righteousness in which the Soul dare venture to be found when it shall stand before the Judgement-seat of God. And certainly, this is Christ, as obedient to the Father.

th of the cross. And it is likewise clear, that the
g which doth engage the soul to Christ, is not
because he is good in himself, but because he
good to us.

. And there is this lastly, that we would have
knowing, That though faith doth alone justifie,
Faith doth not justifie being alone : Hence is
which we have so often in Schools, *Fides justi-*
t solum, licet non solitarie, That Faith justifieth
ne, though not being alone ; as James doth speak,
It without works is dead, and is of none effect.

Now that which secondly we shall speak to, shall
this ; to point out to you some differences betwixt
ifying Faith, which is in a real Believer, and
temporary Faith which is in an Hypocrite, and one
it is destitute of that everlasting hope, though he
pretend to have it.

And first, that there is such a thing as temporary
ith, as is clear from *Luke 8. 13.* it is said there of
me, *that they believed for a season ; yea, in Act. 8. 13.*
is said of *Simon Magus* (who was in the gall of bitter-
ss & in the bond of iniquity) *he believed.* And those
Joh. 2. 23. *when they did behold the miracles, they*
believed on Jesus Christ: and yet we conceive that their
ith was not sincere, and so this was not saving faith.
nd indeed ye may see a difference betwixt these
wo in the very name *temporary*; for this is such a faith
doth not continue long with him that hath it, but
oth evanish and pass away: for as this is certain, *that*
a hypocrite will not always call upon God. Joh. 27. 10.
o that is also certain, that an hypocrite will not always
believe in God I tell you, that the longest time an
ypocrite doth keep his faith, *Job* hath set down in
his 18. Chapter, verse 14. *Their hope (saith he) shall*
bring them to the King of terrors, and then it shall be root-
ed out of them and their tabernacle; their faith wil bring
them

them no further then the gates of death, and their faith will flee away as a dream, and evanish like a vision of the night.

II. There is this difference likewise betwixt that temporary faith it closeth with Christ as a Saviour and for righteousness ; but it closeth not with Christ as a Prince, and for sanctification ; but justifying faith taketh Christ as well for a Prince, as it taketh him for a Saviour: and if *Solomon* did discern who was the mother of the child; by that, that she who should be the child divided, was not the mother of the child: we may say, that they who would divide Christ in his Offices, it is an evidence that they are not among those who are actually made partakers of the adoption of children: there is somewhat of this pointed out in *John 6. 66.* Where that which made many who were his disciples (and did once believe) desert him, because of the hardnesse of his command, *this is a hard saying, who can hear it?* And it is certain, it is a greater difficulty for a Christian to take Christ as a Prince, then a Saviour: for by that he must make an absolute resignation of himself over to Christ, not to be reduced. O! when saw you such a fight with Christ, that ye were constrained to cry out (with a complement) to him, *Truly, I am thy servant, O my Lord, thy servant?* O were ye never ravished with one of his eyes, nor overtaken with one chain of his neck? Believe me, they who see him thus, do believe that his commands are not grievous.

III. There is this difference, that temporary faith is attained unto without the exercise of the Law ; but justifying faith is not attained to without some measure of the exercise of the Law : this is clear, *Mark 16. 7.* where speaking of these temporary believers, it is said of them, *The fruit immediatly sprang up &c.* Are there not some (it may be here) who think they do believe

d yet were never in any measure trembling under
 e discovering and condemning power of the Law ?
 not that a mystery, that one should bring forth
 without travelling ? And is not this a mystery in
 ristianity, that one should believe before he hath
 and the pangs of the New birth ? I am afraid of this,
 at many of us have taken up our Religion at our
 ot ; for there are many who take up Religion before
 eligion take them up. But would ye know the pro-
 erties of a Christians Faith ? *It is a begotten Faith,*
Pet. 1. 2. and not a Faith that is taken up at our
 easure : And I would only say these two things to
 u, be perswaded of this, that hypocrisie may be
 an with a very smal threed : so that the most dis-
 rning Christian cannot take up that desperate
 mity that is in them. How long did *Judas* lurk un-
 r the name of a Saint, even with these that were
 ost discerning ? And there is this that we would
 , that among all these *that shall be eternally excom-*
unicate from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory
his power, Hypocrites in Sion shall have the bitter-
 cup of Divine indignation presented unto them.
 ence it is, that Christ, when he would tell the worst
 mpany that one shall have in hell it is alwayes this :
 shall go to that place where hypocrites and sinners
 e : and so it would be of your concernment, that
 the candle of the Lord, ye would *search the inward*
parts of the belly, before ye go down to the grave with a
in your right hand ; a deceiving heart having turned
aside. We confesse it is sad to consider these
 xious disappointments that many in those dayes shal
 ce meet with.

IV. But there is this last difference betwixt justi-
 ng Faith, and temporary Faith, That there are
 ree precious effects of justifying Faith, whi
 mporary believer cannot win to.

1. To be denyed to all his enjoyments and attainments, and walk humbly under them, for we say, that it is impossible for an hypocrite to be denyed to his enjoyments, he maketh such a deceit of them, and worships them, or rather he worships himself in them. There are three great graces the hypocrite doth pursue after, (though he rather loveth them as gifts than as graces :) Knowledge; Prayer; and Humility : And though it be but little that he can attain of any of the three, (or rather nothing in a saving way) yet least of all can he attain the last, yea, we may judge that there is always within his bosom a standing conviction, that he could never win unto that gracious grace of humility. O could ye never win to this, to count your own righteousness as filthy rags, and to rejoyce alone in the righteousness of a crucified Saviour? I will press this upon you by the way (O Christians of this generation) forget your perfections, and remember your imperfections ; have a holy oblivion of your attainments, but have a Divine remembrance of your shortcomings ; look more to what is before you than to what is behind, and thus shall you have evidence true justifying Faith.

2. It is an effect of justifying Faith, to be under some constant and Divine impression of the preciousness of Jesus Christ, according to that word, 1 Cor. 2. 7. *To you who believe, Christ is precious ;* not said, that Christ was precious, or shall be precious, but it is said, *He is precious*, which imports, (as we use to speak) a continued act ; ye never know what it was to dwell twenty hours under the impression of the matchless excellency and precious worth of a crucified Saviour, will pose you with this ; Are there not some (and elsewhere) that pass under the notice

nts, that never knew what it was to dwell half an
r under these high and elevating thoughts of pre-
sness of Jesus Christ? So that we profess we can-
tell whether we shall call him precious or under-
ed: but we may conjoyn these two names together
t he is precious (and yet) undervalued Christ:
. By true justifying Faith, a Christian winneth to
rtification of his invisible and predominant lusts,
ch is impossible for a temporary believer to win
And is there not a great difference betwixt an Idol
en it is cast out, and an Idol when it goeth out?
ill tell you the great mortification of hypocrites,
devil was living in them as one that was a black
, and now he cometh again and transformeth
self into an Angel of light: He was living in
n before by his spirit of profanity, and now he
ch in them by the Spirit of hypocrisie, and coun-
teiting of these things that were never clear attain-
nts, while it is the Noble dignity of Faith, *Acts*
9. To purifie the heart. But are there not many here
o never knew what it was to mortifie one lust for
rist? Can such a delusion overtake you, O
eists! that ye shal reign with Christ, if ye die not
h him? There is an opinion vented in these days,
t there may be repentance in Heaven, and I think
ould seem that the Christians of this age have
ch of that opinion, we are so little in repentance
ile we are here below: but know that Faith and
ctification are two inseparable companions; And
me tell you, if ye would know the compend
the precious exercise of Faith; It is this, Faith
h three great things, that it perpetually contem-
tes and views. 1. Faith looketh to the promise,
d there it doth rejoyce and rest upon it. 2. Faith
oketh to the duties that are commanded, and there
ryeth out, *Here am I, I will obey and hearken unto*
the

the voice of the word. And, 3. Faith looketh crown, and there it doth exult and sweetly receive divine expectation. And, O what a sight is that, to hold that everlasting Prince standing at the end of the race, having a crown in his right hand, with this ingraven on it. *He that persevereth to the end shall be saved?* And what a Faith, suppose ye shall it be then when we shall get on that immortal Crown of blessedness? What think ye is the exercise of these things above? O heaven, heaven, if we did know it, would we not be in an holy extasie of desire, till we were there? And blessed be he eternally, that hath chased that precious felicity to us.

Now we shall at this time shut up our discourse by speaking a little to these things in which a Christian doth ordinarily meet with assurance of his rest in God, and is put to the divine workings of grace of Faith; for there are some sealing times for a Christian.

I. The first time of the sealing is, after the mortification of some predominant lust and idol, then we are admitted to read their names in these present and ancient records of heaven, and to see (in the Books) their unworthy names written by the hand of that everlasting Prince. This is clear, *Rev. 2. To him that overcometh will I give a white stone, and on the stone a new name written, that no man knows, save he that receiveth it.* And from that, *2 Tim. 4. 8.* Believe me, more mortification would make more believing; but would ye know the original of mortification of our lusts. I know not where the most of us intendeth to lodge at night, but this is certain that we live with much contentment with our sins, and these predominant Idols, that do so much poison us.

I. It is readily a sealing time to a Christian, when he is admitted to the divine enjoyment of these satisfying delights that are to be found in Christ: When did it that the Spouse cryed out so often, *My beloved is mine, and I am his?* Was it not when she was brought to the banqueting house, and his banner over her was love? Believe me, more communion with an absent Christ should make more intimation (in a divine manner) of peace with him. We desire to blesse those that are above the reach of all these disputings and questions we are so much subject unto.

II. This is a sealing time to a Christian, when he is much in the exercise of secret prayer, and of much conversing, and corresponding with God in that duty, as is clear from that word in *Dan. 9. 21.* When *Daniel* is praying at the evening oblation, in the 23. verse, he meets with a divine intimation that is peace with God; *O man greatly beloved of God,* as the Original hath it, *O man of great desires;* for he was desirable in need, and precious to him who holdeth the Saints in his right hand.

III. V. This also is a sealing time to a Christian when he is called to the exercise of some great work, and is to be put upon some eminent holy imployment; this is clear, *Jer. 1. 5.* where *Jeremiah* being called to preach the Gospel unto such a rebellious people, then hath his eternall election declared unto him: *Before thou wast formed in the womb, I knew thee,* Christ, as it were, giveth them that, to be meat to them for forty dayes, and that in the strength of it, they may go many dayes journey.

IV. There is also another sealing time, when a Christian is first begotten to a precious and everlasting hope; for when at first Christians begin to be acquainted with Christ, even then sometimes he declareth to them his boundless and everlasting love.

And

And that is the ground why some of those who are but babes in Christ, are so much in the exercise of diligence, so much in the exercise of the grace of love, and so much in the exercise of the grace of tenderness, it is even because of the solemn impression of their interest in Christ; that, as it were, they are daily taken in to read their own names in letters in the Lambs book of life.

¶ I. And there is this last time, that is a season to a Christian, and that is, when he is purged by some sad and afflicting dispensation: *when the furnace is hot seven times more then ordinary*: Then doth God condescend to manifest himself to his people. When was it that *John* met with most of the Revelations of heaven? Was it not when he was in the *island of Patmos*, for the testimony of *Jesus Christs* Kingdom and patience of our blessed Lord? *Rev. 1. 9.* And at that place, *2 Cor. 4. 16.* *Though our outward man decay, yet our inward man is renewed day by day.*

Now we would press you to be more serious in the exercise of this precious grace. And I shall tell you the compend of Christianity in these few words. By Faith to solace your selves in Christs inviolable vertues and excellencies. And, 2. by hope, to be viewing that precious Crown, and these everlasting mercies that are to be given to the Saints. And, 3. by mortification, to be crucifying your idols. And, 4. by patience, to be possessing your souls, until you shall pass through that dark land, to that valley of everlasting delight. And as for those that contemn and undervalue the blood of this everlasting Covenant (& I would have all those that delight not in dwelling with Christ, and these who have not misbelieved their cross to consider this) *The wrath of the living eternal God doth abide upon them who do not believe* according

According to that word, *Jeh. 3. 36.* He that believeth not
the wrath of God abideth on him. It is a remarkable
case; because of this the wrath of God will not be
a pilgrim to a misbeliever, that will turn aside to
try but for a night, but the wrath of God (to them
who will not believe) shall be their household com-
panion, and shall dwell with them; and wo, wo to them
eternally who have this sad and everlasting com-
panion to abide with them, *the wrath of a living*
God. There is one thing we would have these know-
that among all these who are eternally to be de-
barred from Jesus Christ, misbelievers are put in the
most rank, *Rev. 21. 8.* There he is to put away
the fearful and unbelieving: And from *2 Thess. 1. 18.*
the Lord Jesus Christ shall come from heaven with ten thousand
of his Saints, (What to do) It is even to execute
vengeance on those that obey not the truth of the Go-
spel: That is, who do not believe. And I pose your
hearts with this, whether or not your names be
written there in that roll, among these who shall be
cut off? And that word, *2 Thess. 2. 12.* That they
might be damned who believed not, but took pleasure in
unrighteousness. O but the wrath of a dying Christ,
and of a crucified Saviour is dreadful! It is more sad
and terrible than the wrath of God should have been
if Christ had not died. I will tell you (O hypocrites
of Sion) the worst news that ever were published in
our ears, and it is this, Christ died and rose again,
and to those that are begotten to a lively hope, they
have the glad tidings of great joy, and therein they may
comfort themselves) but ye may wear a rough gar-
ment to deceive, and go to heaven in your own ap-
prehension: But, O the sad disappointment that is
waiting on many such. And to close with this, we
would obtest you, as ye would answer to your ter-
rible and dreadful Judge, that shall stand one day up-
on

on his Throne, which he shall fix in the clouds, obtest you by all the joys of Heaven, and we you by all the everlasting pains of Hell, and we you by all the curses that are written within the sum of this book, and by all the sweet and comfortable promises that are in this everlasting Gospel by the love that ye owe to your immortal souls as ye would not crucifie Christ afresh, believe embrace the offers which are presented now unto you. Know ye whether or not this shall be the lastmonds that ye shall get to believe? That so, if ye reject it, Christ shall come from Heaven, and pronounce that sad and lamentable sentence to you *part from me ye cursed, I know you not.* No him that can bless these things to you, we desire give praise.

SERMON III.

I Joh. 3. 23. *This is his Commandment, that ye should believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ.*

IT was a command that Solomon gave unto his Son, Prov. 22. 26. That he should not be for debt, nor should be one of those that stretch out hands; But, O! what spotless breaches of this Command hath our blessed Lord Jesus committed when he did condescend to be surety for our sins and to pay that was impossible for us to satisfy. Hath not Christ made a precious exchange for sinners? He wreathed about his own precious blood that bond and yoke of our iniquities, and hath given to us that unweariable, easie, and portable way of his Commandments; among which this is the first. *That we should believe on him.* Spotless Christ was made sin for us, that sinful we might be justified by the righteousness of God in him: And is not this

con

condemnation of the world, *that we will not believe* in him? that we will not delight our selves in loving him (And I would say this to you, that though I would weep the one half of your days, and pray the other half. Yet, if ye want this noble grace of him, *Your righteousness shall be but like a menstruous cloth and filthy rags before him*, for what is praying without believing, but a taking of His blessed Name in vain? What is conferring upon the most divine and precious Truths of God, without believing? Is it a lying to the Holy Ghost, and a flattering of ourselves with our mouth? And we would have you saying this, that there is a sweet harmony that is made up betwixt *Moses* and Christ, betwixt the Law and the Gospel. The Law bringeth us to Christ for our salvation, and Christ bringeth us back again to the Law to be a rule of our walk, to which we must subject ourselves. So then, would ye know the compend of a Christians walk? *It is a sweet travelling betwixt mount Sinai and mount Sion, betwixt Moses and Christ, betwixt the Law and the Gospel.* And we conceive that it is more deep that the exercise of the Law be in a Christians conscience, before his closing with Christ, than it is so much the more precious and excellent advantages waiting for him.

There is this advantage that waiteth on the deep exercise of the Law: that it is the way to win to much enrichment in the Faith, when once we begin to close with Christ. O Christians, would ye know what maketh the superstructure and building of grace to be within you, *as a bowing wall, and as a defence fence?* (So that oftentimes ye are in hazard to lose the foundation) it is this, ye were not without the exercise of the Law before your believing in Christ. There are some who do not abide many days at mount *Sinai*, and these shall not dwell many days at mount *Sion*.

II. There

II. There is this advantage that waiteth of the deep exercise of the Law, it maketh Christ precious to a mans soul. What is that which filleth the heart of a Christian with many high and excellent thoughts of Christ? Is it not this, to have the Law register our Band, and putting us (as we use to speak) the horn? that is, to have the Law cursing us, and using the sentence of condemnation against us. which maketh us have such low and undervalued thoughts of precious Christ, is, because the most of us are not acquainted with the deep and serious exercise of the Law; that is a mystery to the most of Christians practice. Ye know that there were four streams which went out from the Paradise of Eden into which man was first placed: And so we may say that there are four golden streams, by which the destroyed man is brought back again to this Paradise and Paradise of everlasting delights. First, there is the precious stream of Christs righteousness, by which we must be justified. And secondly, There is the stream of his Sanctification, by which we must be purified. Thirdly, There is that stream of the Kingdom of Christ, by which we must be comforted through this wilderness wherein we have long way. And fourthly, There is the stream of Redemption, by which we must be delivered from the power of our enemies, and must turn the tables in the gate. It is by the Redemption of Christ that we shall once sing that triumphant Song, *Where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?* but all these streams will be sweet and refreshing to a soul that is hotly pursued by the Law. So long as we see not the ugliness of our leprosie in the glass of the Law, we have our own *Abana* and *Parphar*, which we think may do our turn: but when once our eyes are truly laid open to us, then will we be constrained to wash our selves in *Jordan* seven times. II.

II. There is this advantage that waiteth on the exercise of the Law, that it maketh a Christian constantly under the impression of the sinfulness of man. What is it that maketh sin exceeding sinful to a Christian? Is it not this, He hath been forty days in Moses School? And we conceive that the ground of such fools as we make a mock of sin, is because they know not what it is to be under the power of his wrath and the apprehensions of the indignation of

God. At now to come to that which we intend to speak. We told you, at the first occasion that we spake these words, that there were many excellent things concerning the grace of Faith, holden forth in Scripture. The first thing (which was holden forth concerning this radical grace of Faith) was the infinite advantage that redoundeth to a Christian through the exercise of Faith, and giving obedience to this command: which we cleared to be holden forth, not from the scope, but also from the nature of this command. And now to speak a little to the point, we propose these considerations, that may abundantly shew how advantagious a thing this excellent love of Faith is.

The first consideration, that speaketh it, is this, Faith maketh Christ precious to a soul, according to that word, 1 Pet. 2. 7. *To you that believe, he is precious.* And we would have you know, that Faith maketh Christ more precious to the soul, nor sense, or any other thing can make him. First, Faith maketh Christ more precious nor because the estimation which the grace of Faith hath of Christ, it is builded upon the excellency of his person: but the estimation of sense it is builded upon the excellency of his actings: so that, because he doeth good to them, therefore they love and esteem him.

But

But that Heroick grace of Faith, it taketh up the excellency of Christs person, and that maketh him precious to them. Secondly, Faith maketh Christ precious then sense, because sense looketh to that which Christ manifesteth in his face, and in his hands and in his feet : but Faith looketh to that love which is in his heart. Sense will cry forth, *who is like thee whose countenance is like Lebanon, excellent as the snow, whose hands are as gold rings, set with Beryl, and whose legs are like pillars of Marble set in sockets of silver*. Sense will look to the smilings of Christ, and wonder ; it will look to his dispensations and workings, and will be constrained to cry out, *who is like unto thee?* But the grace of Faith solaceth it self with the Fountain from whence all these springs and inundations of love do flow. Thirdly, Faith maketh Christ more precious then Sense; because Faith looketh not only to what Christ is presently ; but to what Christ is from eternity before time, and to what Christ shall be unto eternity after time ; But Sense only doth look to what Christ is presently. A Christian must conceive, that the sweet travellings of love betwixt infinite love from eternity before, and finite love unto eternity after, must make Faith fall in a sea of wondering, and raiseth the thoughts to the highest pitch of desire and estimation. Finally, we may likewise add, that the impression of the preciousness of Christ, which sense maketh in the soul, is not so constant, nor so single, as that which Faith doth make. O but the grace of Faith giveth the Christian a broad look of Christ, and maketh him see Christ cloathed with ornaments of glory and divine Majesty. Sense followeth Christ, that it may see his miracles and love, that it may be fed with loaves ; but Faith follows Christ, for his sake self above all.

I. The second consideration, to speak the advantage of it, is, that the grace of Faith, it hath, as it were, an arbitrary power with God; so that *whatsoever a Christian shall seek in Faith, he shall receive it.* This is the noble gift that was once given to Faith, and it never should seek any thing and be denied, according to that word in *Matt. 21. 22. And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive it.* And that word in *Joh. 15. 7. Abide in me, and ye shall abide; and the promise is annexed to this: whatsoever ye shall ask ye shall receive.* And it is clear and wise from the preceeding verse to our Text, that we obey this command of Faith, *whatsoever we ask of God, we shall receive it.* And I would bring these two things to you from this. First, that sometimes Christ putteth a blank in a Christians hand, and is much in the exercise of Faith, according to that in *Matth. 20. 32. Is there not an ample blank into that mans hand? What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?* Christ desireth him to fill up that blank with what he would. And secondly, there is another which is one of the greatest steps of Christs childlike condescendency, that oftentimes when his Disciples have sought in their presumption a blank to be put into their hand, Christ condescendeth to give it, according to that strange passage in *Mark 10. 35, 36. Two Disciples who present this desire to Christ, say they, that whatsoever we ask, thou shalt give it unto us.* And presently that is answered, *What will ye that I should do for you?* Christ hath an infinite good will to satisfy the desires of his own: and that which yet more speaketh out Christs boundless good will to satisfy the desires of all that belong unto him, it may be cleared in that word, *Joh. 16. 23. where he chargeth his Disciples with this: Ask ye of the Father, in my name, and he will give you whatsoever ye shall ask.* He saith he, *have ye asked me nothing; ye must not have asked me, for I have said all that I would say unto you, lest that Peter, James and John never sought a*

suite of Christ; but the meaning of that expression is this: Ye sought nothing in comparison of which I was willing to give, and which your necessity did call for at my hands, which ye should sought.

III. There is this third consideration, to point out the advantage of Faith: it is that grace which keepeth all the graces of the Spirit in life and exercise. Faith is that higher wheel, at the motion of which the lower wheels do move: if so we may speak, Faith is that *Primum mobile*, that first mover, which turns about all the lower graces of the Spirit, according to that, *2 Pet. 1. 5. Add to your Faith, verity, and to your vertue, patience, and to your patience, brotherly kindness.* First, the grace of Faith keepeth in exercise the grace of love, as is clear *Eph. 3.* where these two graces are conjoyned. As likewise from *Rom. 5. 1.* compared with *verse 5. Being justified by Faith.* Then this effect followeth upon it, *love of God is shed abroad in our hearts.* And so it is certain, that Faith keepeth love in life. Faith being the spy of the soul, and that intelligencer, precious messenger: it goeth out and bringeth objects unto love. Faith draweth aside the vail, and love sitteth down and solaceth it self in the discovery of Faith. Secondly, the grace of Faith likewise keepeth the grace of mortification in exercise, as is clear, not only from *Eph. 6. 6.* but from *1 John 4. 4. This is our victory whereby we overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil, our Faith.* And it is certain that Faith keepeth mortification in exercise, and advanceth holiness, not only because of this, that Faith is that grace which presenteth to a Christian the absolute purity and spotless holiness of Jesus Christ; but also because it maketh them esteem their Idols tasteless as the vail of an egg, and they become unto them as their rowful meat. The best principle of mortification

s, the discoveries of the invifible vertues of Jesus Christ: that mortification which arifeth from the lively discoveries of the excellency of Jesus Christ, moft real and abiding; as thefe waters which rife from the higheft fountains, are not only constant, but alfo moft deep and excellent. Thirdly, Faith alfo hath influence upon mortification, as it doth hold of that infinite ftrength that is in Christ, which a Christian is enabled to mortifie his corruptions. Fourthly, Faith likewife maketh application of the blood of fprinkling, by which we are purified from dead works. Fifthly, Likewise the grace of Faith keepeth in exercife the grace of Humility, as is clear, Rom. 3. 27. *By what law, faith he, is boasting excluded? It is not by the law of works, but by the law of Faith.* Sixthly, Faith keepeth in exercife the grace of joy, as is clear, Rom. 15. 13. *Now the God of peace fill you with all joy and peace in believing.* So ye fee the proper fruit of Faith, is joy in the holy fpirit. And certainly, did we believe more, we could rejoyce more. Seventhly, and laftly, Faith keepeth in exercife the grace of hope, for it is impoffible for hope to be in lively exercifes, except Faith once be exercifed, which may be a fhame unto us; for how can we hope to attain the thing that is promifed; except our Faith firft clofe with the promife? So there is this difference betwixt the grace of Faith, and the grace of Hope; the grace of Faith clofeth with the promifes; but the grace of Hope, it clofeth with the thing that is promifed.

V. There is this fourth Confideration, that may take out the excellency of the grace of Faith; It is that grace by which a Christian doth attain to moft intimate fellowship, and constant correſpondency with heaven. Would ye have that queſtion reſolved and determined, What is the beſt way, *Not to ſtir up our ſleep, nor awake him until he pleaſe.* It is this, be

much in the grace of Faith: this is clear from
 3. 17. *That Christ may dwell in your hearts by*
 By the exercise of all other graces, Christ is but
 a journeyer, *That turneth aside to tarry but for a*
 but by the exercise of this grace, he cometh to take
 house with us, I will tell you what Faith is. It
 is a ladder that reacheth between Heaven and Earth
 the steps of which, a Christian doth daily go
 up to Heaven, and converse with the higher House.
 It is that grace, (as the Apostle speaketh) by which
 we have access to the Throne of his grace. Faith
 is in the Believer to the Throne: and without
 it cannot have access there, nor joy when he is there.

V. Here is this advantage that attendeth the
 exercise of Faith; A believing Christian is a perfect
 Christian: according to that word in *Mark*
 where these two are conjoyned together, *Lord*
believe: and then he falleth to his prayer presently
 with that confession, *Help thou my unbelief*. And it is
 from *Psal. 63. 1. O God, thou art my God, early*
I seek thee, my soul thirsteth for thee. And some
 say Faith is a most impatient grace: but we may
 say of it, that it is a most diligent grace. Oh
 not the neglect of this precious exercise of faith
 of the duty of secret Prayer, that makes our lives
 a wilderness? I am perswaded of this, that since
 Christ had any followers, and since ever this everlast-
 ing Gospel was preached in Paradise, the exercise
 of secret prayer was never so much neglected. We
 have turned over all our prayers into complements
 to God. We know not what it is to rise at midnight
 and call upon God, and to inquire after our Maker
 under the silent watches of the night. O but it is a
 diversion from sleep, to retire our selves (in
 silent seasons of the night) from all thoughts
 of worldly matters, and to converse with that infinite
 Majesty.

VI. There is this sixth consideration to point out the advantage of Faith : That Faith is that grace that doth facilitate a Christians obedience, and maketh it the most pleasant and easie ; This is clear from Heb. 1.

By Faith Abraham, when commanded to go to a strange land, obeyed, and went out, not knowing whether he went. The word may be rendred, He did fearfully obey. And ver. 17. By faith he offered up his only Son. Would ye know the reason why his commands are your burden, and why his precepts are your crosses ? It is because of this, *Ye do not believe :* and so it is most certain, that it is impossible for a Christian to attain to a pleasant way of obedience, without the exercise of Faith. Faith holdeth up the crown to a Christian, and this crown maketh him obey. Faith gathereth strength from Christ, and that strength maketh obedience very easie. Faith taketh up the excellency of Christ, and this maketh a Christian to look upon his duty, more as his dignity, than his duty. And we are perswaded of this, that our chariot-wheel should move more swiftly, *(like the chariots of Aminadab)* if we were more in the exercise of the grace of Faith. Would ye know an answer to that question, What is first most requisite for a Christian while here below? Faith; And what secondly is most requisite? Faith ; And what thirdly most requisite for a Christian ? even Faith, Faith above all things, and above all things, Faith.

VII. There is another advantage of it, that Faith our service and prayers are accepted of God. Would ye know what is the prayer of a Christian that is not in Faith ? It is *a smoke in his nostrils, and a fire that burneth all the day. The unbelievers sacrifice is an abomination to the Lord.* This is clear from Heb. 11. 4. By faith Abel offered up unto God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain ; and we conceive that there are many unanswered prayers which we do put up,

up, because we want that noble exercise of Faith

VIII. And lastly, we shall likewise add that Faith is the grace by which a Christian hath perfect and immediate sight (as it were) of things that are promised to him; Faith bringeth a Christian within sight of Heaven, and Faith bringeth a Christian within sight of God, according to that word, *Heb. 11. 1. Faith is the evidence of things not seen*: And that noble paradox, that is faith, *Heb. 11. 27. By faith Moses saw him that is invisible*. Is it not an impossible thing, to see which cannot be seen? But the meaning of it is That Faiths discoveries of God, are as certain as the discoveries of our bodily eyes are: It is an intelligent grace; yea, it is a most sure and fallible grace; What will Faith not do? And can ye do who want Faith?

Now to enforce the advantages and excellencies of Faith a little more, we shall propose to you the disadvantages of that woful sin of unbelief.

I. There is this disadvantage of the sin of unbelief, that all the actions that proceed from an unbeliever, they are impure and defiled, according to that in *Tit. 1. 15. But unto them that are defiled, and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. Their prayer is unclean*: yea, *Solomon speaketh*) *their plowing is sin*: yea, going about the most excellent duties (for man without Faith is an abomination to God, according to that word *Rom. 14. 23. What ever is not of Faith, is sin*: the want of Faith is the great polluter of all actions and of all our performances.

II. There is this second disadvantage of unbelief, that it is impossible for one in the exercise of unbelief, to mortifie a lust or idol: and we may add unto these words in *Matth. 17. 20. When his disciples came to him and asked this question,*

ould we not cast out this devil? That was given as answer, because of your unbelief: Unbelief is that which taketh up arms for our idols; and doth most strongly defend them: for there is nothing that will corrupt so much, as the exercise of Faith: and when that is laid aside, we have laid by our weapons, and have in a manner concluded a treaty of peace with our idols, that we shall not offend them, if they offend not us.

III. There is this disadvantage that waiteth upon the sin of unbelief, that such an one cannot win nor gain to the grace of establishment, but is always as waves of the sea, tossed to and fro, until once he cometh to the exercise of Faith, as is clear from *Isa. 7. 2.* *Except ye believe, ye shall not be established.*

IV. There is this disadvantage that waiteth on it is the mother of hardness and stupidity of heart, according to that word in *Mark 16. 14.* Where he upbraideth them because of their unbelief: and sheweth what danger followeth, to wit, *hardness of heart:* as is clear also from *Acts 19. 9.* Where these two evil-devils are so conjoyned and locked together, *unbelief and hardness of heart*, because it is unbelief indeed, that hindreth all the graces, by which the grace of tenderness must be maintained.

V. There is this disadvantage in the sin of unbelief, that it is big with child of apostacy from God, and of defection from him, according to that word, *Job. 3. 11.* *Beware lest there be in any of you, an evil heart of unbelief, (and there the fruit of it) to desert from the living God.* And certainly it is no wonder, that unbelief travel in birth, till that cursed child of Apostacy be brought forth; not only because of this, that an unbeliever loseth the thoughts of the excellency of Christ, but also because he increaseth in his thoughts of love toward his idols: for Christ doth decrease in those who mis-

believe, and their idols do increase in their love in their desires, and in their estimation.

VI. There is this sixth disadvantage in the sin of unbelief, it hindereth the communication of any signal workings and tokens of the love and favour of the most High, according to that said that is in *Mat. 13. 58.* at the close, *He could not there do many mighty works because of their unbelief.* Unbelief, as it were, laid a restraint on Christ, he could not effectuate these things which he was willing to perform. And (to shut up our discourse at this time) I would only add these two aggravations, which may somewhat enforce what we have spoken; (I say) there are these two aggravations in the sin of unbelief, even in his own who has the right (and also his call) to believe: 1. That Christ hath given most sensible discoveries of himself, wherein ye have seen him, as it were, face to face, yet we will not believe: this is clear *Joh. 6. 36.* *Though ye have seen me, saith Christ, ye do not believe in me.* There is not a manifestation of Christs presence, but it is a witness against you, because of your unbelief. Would ye hear the voice of sense, that is rectified? It is this, believe on the Son of God. Secondly, That notwithstanding of the signal demonstrations of the power of Christ, yet, though it were the mortifying of the lust and idol within them, yet they will not believe, but upon new temptations will doubt of his love to them. Christ preacheth Faith, by his Word, he preacheth faith by his sufferings, He preacheth faith by his dispensations, He preacheth faith by his mercies, He preacheth faith by his rods; and if these five instruments will not engage your hearts to believe, what can move them? Do not his precious wounds in his precious hands, preach out this power of Faith, believe him: Doth not that hole of

in his side, preach this Doctrine, *That we should live in him*? And these two wounds, that he lived in his precious feet, do they not preach *That we should believe on a crucified Saviour*? we would only say this, that sometime it is case of his own, that after the convictions of that it is their duty to believe, and also after he desires to close with Christ, yet they find inability to close with him. Is it not certain that to (to believe) is sometime present with you; how to perform ye know not? And I would see a Christian making this fourfold use of such a dispensation as that, (which is most ordinarily) in convictions of our duty to believe, and sometimes to close with Christ, is not followed with equal performances.

2. To study to have your convictions more deep-rooted within you; for it doth sometimes follow, that resolutions and mints to believe, are not blest in actual believing; because the conviction of our duty to believe, is not deeply imprinted upon our conscience.

3. Be convinced of that desperate enmity (*and mystery of iniquity*) that is within you, that ye have some will to do, without ability to perform. We confess, it is not an ordinary disease in these days, to have such a contrariety betwixt a Christians will and his practice, our will for the most part being no better then our practice; But sometime it is, which may make you cry forth, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death*?

4. That ye would be much in the imploying of Christ, that as he hath given you to will, so also he might make you to do. Christ is about to con-
vince his own in such a dispensation as that, *That faith is the gift of God*. Faith is so noble a grace, that

it cannot be spinned out from our resolutions from our endeavours ; Faith is such a divine *as the Fathers right hand must plant in our souls.*

4. Let it convince you of the excellency of grace of Faith (for the difficulty of attaining a thing may speak out the excellency of that) there is no sin but it may be easily win at ; there is an easiness and facility to overtake the of our idols : but the graces of the Spirit are excellent things, that we must fight before we get them. And you who are strangers to Christ (and have never known what it is to close with him) we would request you in Christs Name to be reconciled to him. What know ye, O men, (O ye other Atheists) but this shall be the last summons that ye shall get to believe ? And that because ye disobey this precious summons ; there shall be presented to you that ye cannot sit. I remember one man, who looking upon many thousands were under his command, weeped over them, he considered how that within a few years all should be laid in their graves, and should be in eternity. O but it were much of our concernment to be trying our selves how it is with us. We are afraid that it is a breach of charity, to wish that one of each ten that are within these doors, should be heirs of the grace of life, and had the solid and actual expectation of heaven. I think, if Christ were to come presently to speak to us ; he might not only say to each twelve that are here, *One of you shall betray me :* but we are afraid, that he would say to each twelve that are here, *Eleven of you shall betray me and but one only shall pass free.* O doth it not concern you, to inquire where ye shall rest at last when the long shadow of the everlasting evening shall be stretched out upon you ? I think there are many that are so settled upon their lees, that if they

day in Hell, and saw all the torments that are there, and were brought from it the next day to live on earth, they would not repent. And more, there are some, that take them up one day to see the joys of Heaven, and bring them back again, they would not forsake after these blessed and everlasting enjoyments. Is not Christ much undervalued by us? But I will tell you this, *One wo is past, but behold another is fast coming.* O the screeching of these spirits that are entred into their everlasting prison-house, of which there is no redemption. What shall be your choice, when Christ shall come in the clouds? I am perswaded, there are many, to whom that day, this Doctrine would be ravishing, viz. that there were not a death, that there were not a God, that there were not an eternity. Oh! will ye believe that the sword of the justice of God is bathed in Heaven, and shall come down to make a sacrifice not in the land of Idumea, nor in the land of Bozra; but he is to make a sacrifice among his people who seemed to make a Covenant with him by sacrifice. Ah, ah, shall we say that? that argument were used to many, that within thirty days they should be at their long and everlasting home, they would yet spend thirty nine of these days in taking pleasure upon their lusts. I am perswaded of this, that there are many who think that the way betwixt Heaven and Earth, is but one days journey; they think he can believe in one day, and triumph at night: But O! it shall be a short triumphing that such Believers as these shall have. Therefore, O study to close with a crucified Saviour, rest in him by Faith, delight your selves in him with love, and let your selves be longing for the day when that voice shall be heard in heaven, (and O how sweetly shall it be sung!) *Arise, arise, arise, my love, my dove, my fair one, and come away: for behold your winter is past, your everlasting summer is come,*

and the time of the singing of birds is near : Christ shall come over these mountains of Bethel shall cry, Behold I come : and the soul shall sw answer, Come blessed Lord Jesus, Come, O wh life shall it be : that with these two arms ye f eternally incircle Christ, and hold him in your or rather be incircled by him? Wait for him, f shall come, and his reward is with him; and he once take home the wearied travellers of hope.

S E R M O N I V.

1 Joh. 3. 23. *This is his Commandment, that ye sh believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ, &c.*

THere are two great and excellent gifts, w God in the depth of his boundless hath bestowed on his own. First, T is that infinite gift and royal donation, own beloved Son, Jesus Christ, which is cal *The gift of God, Joh. 4. 10.* And secondly, T is that excellent gift of the grace of Faith, w God hath bestowed upon his own, which is also led, *The gift of God, Ephes. 2. 8. Faith is the of God.* And is it not certain, that these two grac gifts ought to ingage our souls and hearts much him? Infinite Majesty could give no gift gre then his Son, and infinite poverty could receive other gift so suitable as Christ; It was the noble gift that heaven could give, and it is the g est advantage for earth to receive it. And we co wish that the most part of the study and practio men (that is spent in pursuit after these low transient vanities) might be once taken up in precious pursuit after CHRIST. We could that all the questions and debates of the time turned over into that soul-concerning question, *shall we do to be saved?* and that all the qu

controversies, and contentions of the time were
d over into that divine contention and hea-
debate, *who should be most for Christ, who*
be most for exalting of the noble and excellent
of renown, and that all our judging and search-
of other mens practices and estate might be tur-
ver into that useful search, to prove and exa-
our selves whether we be in the Faith or not. And
ould ask you this question, what are your thoughts
erning precious Christ, seeing he is that noble
t of Faith? We would only have you taking
these things, by which Christ may be much
mended to your hearts: First, There was ne-
ny that with the eyes of Faith did behold the
hless beauty and transcendent worth of that
fied Saviour, that returned his enemy. There is
conquering vertue in the face of Christ, and
e is a heart-captivating and overcoming power in
beauty of Jesus Christ. This first sight that ever
ecuting *Saul* got of Christ, it brought him unto
endless captivity of love. Secondly, There is
that we would say of precious Christ, which
engage our souls unto Him, that for all the
ngs Believers do to Christ, yet hath He never
vil word of them to his Father, but commends
n: which is clear from that of *Joh. 17. 6.* where
ist doth commend the Disciples to the Father for
grace of obedience, *They have kept thy word:*
for the grace of Faith, *vers. 8. They have be-*
ed that thou didst send me: And yet were not the
iples most defective in obedience, both in this,
t they did not take up their Cross and follow Christ:
also in that, they did not adhere to Him in the
that He was brought to *Cajaphas* hall? and were
y not most defective in the grace of Faith? as is
ar from *Matth. 17. 17.* and likewise from *Joh.*
1. He is pressing them to believe in Him, and
yet

yet he doth commend them to the Father, perfect in these things. Thirdly, There is that we would lastly say of Him who is the noble of Faith, look to the eminent depths of Christ's descendency, and then ye will be provoked to Him. Was it not infinite love that made Christ lie three days in the grave, that we might be there all the ages of Eternity with Him? Was it not infinite condescendency that made His precious feet wear a Crown of thorns, that we might eternally wear a crown of Glory? Was it not infinite condescendency that made Christ wear a purple robe, so we might wear that precious robe of the righteousness of the Saints? And was it not matchless condescendency, that Christ, who knew no sin, was made sin for us, and like unto us, that so we might be like unto him, and be made the righteousness of God in Him.

But to come to that which we intend mainly to speak upon at this time, which is that second thing that we proposed to speak of from these words, that is concerning the excellency of this grace of Faith, which we cleared was holden out in that faith was called his commandment, which was called by way of eminency and excellency. There are many things in Scripture, which may sweetly set out the precious excellency of this grace of Faith, and we shall only speak to these things.

I. The first thing that speaketh out the excellency of Faith is this, it exerciseth it self upon a most precious Object (to wit) Jesus Christ: Faith and Love being the two arms of the immortal soul, by which we do embrace a crucified Saviour, which is pointed at in Scripture: and we shall point at three principal acts of Faith, which it exerciseth upon Jesus Christ as the Object of it.

1. The first is, to make up an Union between

and the Believer (Faith being indeed an union of grace, and that which knitteth the members to the head) and to make this more fully appear, we will point out a little what sweet harmony and concordancy there is betwixt these two sister-graces, *viz.* faith and love. Faith is that nail, which fasteneth the Soul to Christ, and love is that grace which driveth that nail to the head ; Faith at first taketh but a tender grip of Christ, and then love followeth in and maketh the soul take a more sure grip of him. Secondly, Ye may see that harmony in this ; that is that grace which taketh hold (as it were) of the garments of Christ, and of his Word ; but love (as an ambitious grace) it taketh hold of the heart of Christ, and, as it were, his heart doth melt in the bosom of love. Thirdly, It may be seen in this, that is that grace, which draweth the first draught of the likeness and image of Christ upon a soul, but then (accomplishing) grace of love, it doth compleat the first draughts and these imperfect lineaments of Christ's Image, which were first drawn on the soul. Fourthly, By faith and love the heart of Christ and the Believer are so united, that they are no more two, but one Spirit.

2. There is this second act that Faith exerciseth upon Christ, and it is in discovering the matchless excellencies, and the transcendent properties of Jesus Christ. O what large and precious commentaries doth faith make upon Christ ? It is indeed that faithful spy, which doth always bring up a good report of him. Hence it is that Faith is called *understanding*, Colos. 2. 2. Because it is that grace, which revealeth much of the precious truth of that noble Object.

3. And there is this third noble act of Faith exercising it self upon Christ, *viz.* It maketh Christ precious to the soul according to that word, 1 Pet. 2. 17.

2. 17. *unto you which believe, he is precious.* there were no other thing to speak forth its but that, it is more then sufficient : for ne this is the exercise of the higher House, to be ling on the contemplation of Christs beauty, have their souls transported with love toward and with joy in him. Reason and amazement seldom companions, but here they do sweetly together ; First, a Christian loveth Christ because Christs actings ; and then he loveth all these because they come from Christ.

II. Now secondly, this pointeth out the ous excellency of the grace of Faith, it is that which is most mysterious and sublime in its a it hath a more divine and sublime way of actin any other grace ; Hence it is called, *The mys Faith*, which speaketh this, that the actings of are mysteries to the most part of the world, shall only point at these things which may spe the mysterious actings of the grace of Faith.

1. Faith can believe, and fix it self on a w promise, although sense, reason and proba seem to contradict the accomplishment of tha mise : Faith it walketh not by the low dicta sense and reason ; but by a higher rule, (to *The sure word of prophecy*, which is clear from 4. 19. *where Abraham believed the promise*, withstanding that sense and reason seemed to o dict it : He considered not the deadness of b body, neither the barrenness of Sarahs womb was strong in the Faith, giving glory to God : is clear from Heb. 11. 29, 30. Where Faith be their passing through the red sea, as throug ground, which was most contrary to sense and son : Faith believed the falling down of the Jericho, by the blowing of horns. Which are most impossible to sense and reason ; for sen after

times cry out, *All men are liars*; And reason will
 now can such a thing be? And yet that Heroick
 of Faith cryeth out, *Hath he spoken it? He will*
do it. Hath he said it? Then it shall come to

Faith can believe a word of promise, notwith-
 standing that the dispensations of God seem to con-
 tradict it; as was clear in *Job*, who professed, *He*
trust in God though he should kill him. And no
 doubt, but this was the practice of believing *Jacob*,
 who trusted that that promise should be accomplished,
 that the elder should serve the younger, though all the
 dispensations of God, (which he did meet with)
 seemed to say, that promise should not be accom-
 plished.

Faith can believe a word of promise, even when
 the commands of God seem to contradict the accom-
 plishment of that promise: This is clear in that sin-
 gular instance of *Abrahams* Faith, that notwithstand-
 ing he was commanded to kill his promised seed (up-
 on whom did depend the accomplishment of the
 promises) yet he believed that the promises should
 be performed. And though there were indeed ex-
 traordinary and strange tryals of his Faith, as he had
 to contend with all affections to wrestle with; yet over the belly
 of these, believing *Abraham*, he giveth faith to the
 world, and bringeth his *Isaac* to the Altar; (though
 he should receive him back again) this is clear from,
Gen. 22. 17, 18, 19.

Faith can exercise it self upon the promise, not-
 standing that challenges and convictions of wor-
 ship and guilt do wait on the Christian; This is
 clear from *2 Sam. 23. 5.* That although *his house was not*
built by God as did become, yet he believed the pro-
 mise. As likewise, it is clear from *Psa. 65. 3.* *Ini-*
quities did prevail against me: and yet that doth not
 corrupt his Faith, but he saith, *As for our transgres-*
sions,

sions, thou shalt purge them away. And certainly were a noble and precious act of Faith to believe notwithstanding of unanswerable challenges of the best way both to crucifie our Idols, and to these challenges, is believing, and hoping, hope, and closing with Christ: This is more from *Isa. 64. 6, 7.* compared with *vers. 8.* after strange challenges, the Prophet hath a word, *But now, O Lord, thou art our Father.* is an Emphasis in the word (now) for all thou art (now) our Father.

5. And lastly, this pointeth out the mystery of the grace of Faith, that it exerciseth upon an invisible object, even upon Christ unseen, according to that word, *1 Pet. 5. 8. having not seen, yet ye love, in whom though ye see him not, yet believing, &c.* I pose the part of you who are here, whether or not to two of the greatest Paradoxes and mysteries to you? For is not this a mystery to love whom we never saw? *whom having not seen ye love*: To love an absent and unseen Christ a mystery to the most part of the world: and this a mystery, to believe on him whom we saw, *In whom, though ye see him not, yet believe*. And I shall add this, that Faith can hold fast interest with God, notwithstanding the most part of Christians should call us Hypocrites, and not acknowledge us: this is clear in the practice of *Job* most clear from that word, *Isa. 63. 16. Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not.*

III. Thirdly, this pointeth out the excellency of the grace of Faith, that Faith, (when it is in exercise) is that grace by which a Christian doth rise unto most sensible enjoyments. There is a question that is much debated among Christians,

ay to win this happy length, to be always under the sweet and refreshing influence of heaven, and have his dew always coming down upon our branches. I can give no answer to it, but this, be much in the exercise of Faith: This is clear from that notable name put upon Faith, *Isa. 45. 22.* It is called *looking to Christ*, which is a most sensible act. If you could know a description of Faith, It is this, *divine contemplation of the immortal soul, upon a divine, excellent, and precious object, Jesus Christ.* God never made Faith a liar, and therefore its object never off him that is the noble object of Faith, *Christ manifested in the Gospel*: as it is clear, *1. 13.* *After ye believed ye were sealed with the Spirit of promise, which preacheth out the eternal enjoyments these had after their closing with Christ who is invisible.* Our Faith is called a *vision*, which speaketh out this, that Faiths sight of Christ is as certain as if we did behold him with our eyes, as is clear, *Heb. 11. 27.* *Moses saw him by faith who is invisible.* And we conceive that the reason which maketh the most part of us have such complaints, *How long, wilt thou forget us for ever?* This, the want of the Spiritual exercise of Faith: Are there not some here who may cry out, *It is now been thirty days since I did behold the King*; Yea, there are some who may go a greater length, and cry out, *I have lived these two years at Jerusalem, but yet I have not seen the Kings face*? Yea, there are some here whose complaint may go a little further, and cry forth, *These three years and six months it hath not rained on me, but the clouds have been restrained and bound up, and the Heavens become brass.* And would you know the rise of these complaints, it is this, ye are not much in the Spiritual exercise of Faith. And to you I would only say these two words. First, It is easier to persuade

perswade a reprobate that he is defective in love of God, and in his love to God, then to some such, that they are wanting to God in Faith; for they hold fast that piece of desperate hope till they die. Secondly, We would say of you who have the valley of *Achor* for a door, and have tasted of the sweetness of Christ, you will be less convinced, for the neglect of the duty of Faith, then for neglect of the duty of prayer or of the duty of keeping the Sabbath day. But I am perswaded of this, that if the noble worth of the transcendent object were known, we would have no patience, until once we did believe.

IV. Fourthly, This pointeth out the excellency of the grace of Faith, It is that grace by which a Christian is advanced to the highest and most inestimable pitch of dignity, and that is, to be the child of the living God: As is clear, *Job. 1. 12. To whomsoever he will give power, he shall make him a son of God.* And certainly this noble prerogative of Adoption is much undervalued by many: And I will tell you two grounds whereon the most part of men undervalue that excellency of Adoption: First, They do not take up the highness of God (and what a one He is) or they would cry out with David, *Seemeth it nothing in your eyes to be a son to the King of kings?* Secondly, We do not take up, nor understand the matchless Priviledges which are given to them that are once in this estate. I am perswaded, if they were fully believed, that he who is a servant doth not abide in the house for ever, (though he that is a Son doth) It should stir us up to more divine zeal in our pursuit of Faith.

V. Fifthly, This likewise pointeth out the pre-eminency of the grace of Faith, it is that grace, by which all other actions are pleasant to God, and an

ur hand ; as is clear , Heb. 11. 4. By faith Abel
unto God a more excellent sacrifice then Cain,
must be understood even of all other duties.
that word, verse 6. Without Faith it is impossible
ase God , speaketh this also , That by Faith we
ceedingly please him. And this is a most sad
mentable reproof unto many who are here, that
actions do not please God, because they are not
h. Would you know a description of your pray-

(ye who are hypocrites, and destitute of the
ledge of God) It is this , your prayers are the
h of the third Command , In taking the Name of
rd in vain, for which he will not hold you guiltless.
would ye know what is your hearing of Sermon?

n abomination to the Lord, according to that word
I. 15- To the unbelieving and impure, nothing is
And as Solomon doth speak, The plowing of the
ed is sin: So that all your actions that ye go about,
ut an offence to the Majesty of the Lord,

ow we would speak to these two things before we
ced to the evidences of Faith : (to wit) First,
there is a difference betwixt the direct act of
, and the reflecting act of Faith, For there may
direct act of Faith in a Christian , when he is
perswaded that he doth believe ; but the reflect-
acts of Faith are these , which a Christian hath,
n he is perswaded in his conscience that he doth
eve. And we would secondly say, that there are
y that go down to their grave under that soul de-
ying delusion that they are in Faith , and yet
er did know what Faith is : I am perswaded,
e are many whom all the preachings in the World
never perswade , that they did never believe,
r Faith being born with them , and it will die
n them, without any fruit. But Faith being such
excellent grace, and so advantagious, (whereof we
e spoken a few things) we shall speak a little fur-

the

ther of it. First, in pointing out some evidence which a Christian may know, whether or not indeed in the Faith. Secondly, I shall give you helps whereby Faith may be kepted in exercise.

I. Now there is this first evidence of Faith, Christian who doth believe, he accounteth a lack and want of fellowship with Christ, and communion with him, one of the greatest and most lame crosses that ever he had ; as is clear, *Psalm* *Lighten mine eyes, saith David, that is, I behold, and be satisfied with thy face, and the motive that he backeth it with, is this, lest I sleep of Death.* David thought himself a dead man if Christ did withdraw his presence from him. As is clear, *Cant. 3. 1.* (compared with the following verses) where absence from Christ, and want of communion with him, was the greatest cross the Saints had : and it is clear from *Joh. 20. 11, 12, 13.* *Mary* had a holy disdain of all things in respect of comparison of Christ. But I will tell you what hypocrite doth most lament, and that is the want of reputation among the Saints : that is the great lack and idol among Hypocrites, and that which (not enjoyed) Hypocrites and Atheists lament most in this world, and the lust of their eyes when they see these, then they cry out, *They have taken away my reputation, and what have I more ?* They think Heaven can never make up the loss of Earth. And certainly many of us would examine our selves by this, and would find our selves most defective. I would have all you who are here, who have taken on a name to be followers of Christ, whether or not ye have been content to walk thirty days in absence from Christ and yet never to lament it ? Hath not Christ been absent thirty days and more in Heaven, without a visitation to you ? And yet for all this, ye have not clothed your selves with sackcloth. I will not say, that this is an undeniable

eniable evidence of the total want of the grace of
 h, but it doth eminently prove this, that the
 on who hath come this length, hath losed much of
 primitive love, and much of that high esteem
 ch he ought to have of matchless Christ: what
 you find in this world, that maketh you converse
 tle with heaven? I think that it is the noble en-
 agement of a Christian, when he is going down
 s grave, that he hath this wherewith to comfort
 self, *I am to change my place, but not my company:*
 h to the believing Christian being a blessed transi-
 and transportation to a more immediate, con-
 and uninterrupted enjoyment of God. But I
 ve, that if all who have the name of Believers in
 generation, should go to Heaven, they might
 this to say, I am now not only to change my place,
 also my company; For these seventy years I have
 conversant with my Idols, but now I am to con-
 e with more blessed, divine, and excellent com-
 y. O that ye might be perswaded to pursue much
 an absent Christ. Were it not a sweet period of
 life, to breath out our last breath in his arms, and
 e living in the faith of being eternally with him,
 ch might be founded upon his Word.

I. There is this second evidence of one that is in
 Faith: They do endeavour to advance that ne-
 ary work of the mortification of their idols, accor-
 to that word, *1 Joh. 3. 4. Every man that hath*
hope in him, purifieth himself even as he is pure,
15. 9. Faith it purifieth the heart. And concern-
 this evidence (lest any should mistake it) I would
 these things to you. First, The mortification of
 ristian, as long as he is here below, it doth more
 sist in resolutions then attainments. It is certain
 there are high attainments of a Christian, in the
 tification of his idols, but his resolutions go far
 ve his performances. Secondly, we would say this,
 That

That those Christians who never came this long way to Christianity, to make that an universal confession and full resolution, *what have I to do any more with my idols?* They may suspect themselves, that they are not in the Faith: For a Christian that is in Christ is universal in resolutions, though he be not so in practice, but defective in performances. A Christian that has resolution will be at the gate of heaven, but his practice come from the borders of Hell; there is a long distance betwixt resolution and practice, and the one much swifter then the other. And thus we would likewise say, That ye who never did what it was to endeavour (by prayer and the exercise of other duties) the mortification of your lusts and idols; ye may be afraid, that ye have not yet the grace of seeing him as he is. And I would say this to those who are settled upon their lees, and who never know what it was to spend one hour in secret prayer for mortifying an idol, that they would bewail that curse be past in heaven against them; *I have purged you, and ye would not be purged, therefore ye shall not be purged any more till you die;* the iniquity of refusing to commune with Christ in the sacrament of secret mortification, I say, that iniquity shall not be purged away. And we would once seriously stir you, by that dreadful sentence that Christ has pronounced against you, and by the love ye have to your immortal souls, and by the pains of these everlasting torments of hell, that ye would seriously set to work of spiritual mortification; that so ye may have evidence that ye have believed, and that ye have a soul comforting hope of eternal life. I would speak this one word to you, (and desire you seriously to ponder it,) What if within twelve months hereafter a summons were given you (within a short continuation of days) to compare before

and dreadful Tribunal of that impartial Judge,
 Christ : What suppose ye , would be your
 thoughts ? Will ye examine your own conscience,
 what ye think would be your thoughts , if such sum-
 ds were given unto you, I am perswaded of this,
 your knees would smite one against another , and
 face should gather paleness , seeing your consci-
 would condemn you , That ye had been weigh-
 the ballance and found light : O think ye that ye
 both fight and triumph in one day ? Think ye
 ye can fight and overcome in one day ? Think ye
 lusts and unmortified corruptions so weak and
 hearted an enemy , that upon the first appear-
 of such imaginary champions (as most part
 are in our own eyes) that your idols would
 down arms and let you trample on them ? Believe
 mortification is not a work of one day , or one
 but it is a work will serve you all your time, be-
 as soon as you will : And therefore seeing ye
 spent your days in the works of the flesh , it
 that now ye would begin and pursue after him
 whose works is within him , and whose reward shall
 be before him.

I. Now there is this third evidence, by which
 Christian may know whether he be in the Faith of
 and it is, that Christ is matchless and incom-
 , unto such an one , according to that word
 . 2. 7. *To you that believe Christ is precious* , and
 word that *Luke* hath in his 7. Chapter , at the
 , *That she to whom much was forgiven , loveth*
 Now lest this likewise should prove a dis-
 ment to any , I would onely have you to
 of this , that a Christian may be a Believer
 yet want the sensible discoveries of this ,
 it is matchlessly precious to him : but
 in , that they which are in the lively ex-
 , it is impossible then for them not to

Christ matchless. And I would speak this to many who are here; Have ye not been living ten years in Faith? And I would pose you with Esteem ye not your idols more matchless then and more of worth then he? It is impossible there can be any lively exercise of Faith, and esteem Christ matchless. It is not to say it with mouth, and contradict it with your heart, will be business: For if your hearts could speak, I say, I would sell Christ for thirty pieces of silver, my idols would I sell at no rate. Are there any of you who love the world and its pleasures rather nor the eternity of joy? Oh, know ye the word (O ye desperately ignorant of the True God,) *That he who loveth the world, the loving Father is not in him:* And yet notwithstanding the light of the word, ye would sell your immortality (with Esau) *For a mess of pottage:* O but it is a bargain when ye have sold the eternity of joy for a passing world, and for its transitory delights! I earnestly know what shall be your thoughts that day, when ye shall be standing upon the utmost betwixt time and eternity. O what will be your thoughts at that day? but you are to follow endless pain, (by appearance) and then you leave your idols. I shall only desire, that ye may remember the word, *Isa. 10. 3. What wil ye do in the day of wrath, and in the desolation which shall come from the Lord, whom will ye flee for help! and where will your glory?* Ye shall then preach mortification to all, though all the time of mortification shall then be off. O but to hear a worldly minded man, when eternity of pain is looking him in the face, (preaching concerning the vanity of this world) might it persuade you that the world is a fancy and a dream, shall flee away, and shall leave you in the day of greatest strait.

V. And there is this fourth evidence of Faith, in a Christian, who doth truly believe, he is that Christian who entertaineth a divine jealousy and a suspicion of himself, whether or not he doth believe; I love not that Faith which is void of fear: was clear in the practice of believing Noah, that though by Faith he built the Ark, yet he had fear ed with his Faith. I know that there are some are ignorant concerning this, what it is to doubt concerning eternal peace; and more, it is not every that doubteth, that certainly shall get heaven; nor think an hypocrite may doubt concerning his eternal salvation; however, I think the exercise of a hypocrite under his doubtings, it is more the exercise of judgement, then the exercise of his conscience: I may say, That if all the exercise of the Law, which is preached in these days, were narrowly ched, it would be more the exercise of light, then the exercise of conscience, We speak these things as doubt, which never was our exercise, and we make these things our publick exercise which was our private chamber-exercise. And I think if all that a Christian did speak to God in Prayer, were his exercise, he would speak less and wonder more. We would be speechless when we go to God; often if we did speak nothing but our exercise, we would have nothing to say. And certainly it is so, that often we fall into that woeful sin, *Of des- lying against the Holy Ghost*, by flattering God in our mouth, and lying unto him with our tongue. And I shall only say these two words; There are some who have this for their great design, viz. they would be at peace with their conscience, and they would be at peace with their idols, they would gladly reconcile conscience and their idols together, that is their great design. And there are some whose design is a little more refined, they

study rather to be reconciled with their consciences than to be reconciled with God ; Their goal they shoot at, is this, to get their consciences eased, though they know not what it is, to have the soul-comforting peace of God to quiet them.

V. Now, there is this last evidence of Faith justifying Faith is a Faith which putteth the man to be much in the exercise of these duties which it may be maintained, for we must keep it as the apple of our eye : And for that end, I will only give you these three things, by which it must be kept in exercise ; and a real Christian will be endeavouring in some measure to attain these.

I. It keepeth Faith much in exercise, to be in marking and taking notice of the divine慈 and proofs of the love of God, wherewith a Christian doth meet, as is clear from that word, in *4. Experience worketh hope*. I durst be bold to say that the most part that are indeed in Christ with the Spirit, they are too little in remarking and taking notice of the experiences of his love. Ye should mark the place of your experience, and much more ye should mark the experience it self : as is clear from scripture, that the very place where Christians die is marked with experience, in such an enjoyment of God as he marked it, *Ezek. 1. 1. By the rivers of Chebar the heavens were opened, and I saw the visions of God*. And *Gen. 32. 30. Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, For I have seen the face of God, and my soul is troubled* : so remarkable unto him. And we conceive, that we should mark these two things mainly in your notice. First, Ye would mark (if ye can perceive) the first day of your closing with Christ, and your coming out of *Egypt* : and we may allude unto that command (if not more then allude unto it) in *16. 1. Observe the moneth of Abib, and keep the*

unto the Lord thy God: For in the month of Abib the
thy God brought thee out of the land of Egypt. And
dly, We would have you much in marking these
periences which have increased your Faith, and
h have strengthened your love, and which have
you mortifie your idols; These are experiences
ially to be marked.

Faith is kept in exercise, and we win to the
assurance of our interest in God: which we
d press upon you, by being much in the exercise
ret prayer. O but many loveth much to pray
abroad, who never loved to pray when alone.
that is a desperate sign of hypocrisie, according
at, Mat. 6. 5. It is said of hypocrites, *They love*
standing in the Synagogues, and in the corners of
streets, that they might be seen of men: But it is ne-
ed of these persons, that they love to pray alone,
they loved to pray in Synagogues, but it is se-
nd retired prayer, by which Faith must be keep-
exercise.

And there is this likewise that we would press
you, that ye would be much in studying com-
on and fellowship with God, that so your Faith
be kept in life. And O what a blessed life
it, each day to be taken up to the top of the
at Pisga, and there to behold that promised land,
a refreshful sight of the Crown every morning,
might make us walk with joy all alongs that

The heart of a CHRISTIAN ought to
HEAVEN, His conversation ought to be
, his eyes ought to be there. And I know not
of a Christian ought to be out of Heaven (e-
fore his going there) save his lumpish taber-
of clay, which cannot inherite incorruption,
be made incorruptible. And I shall say no
but this, many of us are readier to betray him
a kiss, and crucifie him afresh, then to keep

communion with him : but wo eternally be
 by whom the Son of man is betrayed, and that de-
 cise Christ afresh ; it were better for him that a
 were hanged about his neck, and he were cast
 depth of the sea. I remember an expression of
 not two days ago, who (upon his death be-
 ing asked of one what he was doing ; did m-
 pidly, though most truely reply, That he wa-
 ing with Christ ; and I think that the most pa-
 (if he prevent us not) shall die fighting with
 But know, and be perswaded, that he is too
 party for us to fight with, He will once tread you
 wine-press of his fury, and he shall return with dy-
 ments from treading such of you as would not
 him ; He shall destroy you with all his heart. Th-
 be instructed lest his soul be disjointed from yo-
 that word in Jer. 6. 8. And lest your soul be e-
 separated from him ; Be I say, instructed to clo-
 him by Faith, Now to him who can make you
 so, we desire to give praise.

In the two Sermons next following, you have the
 these sweet Purposes, which the worthy Author
 ed upon the same Text.

S E R M O N. V.

I Joh. 3. 23. This is his Commandment, that ye (ho-
 lieve on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ, &c.

THere are two great rocks upon which a Ch-
 doth ordinarily dash in his way & motion to
 his rest. 1. The rock of presumption and carnal
 fidence ; so that when Christ dandleth them up
 knees, and satisfieth them with the breasts
 consolations, and maketh their cup to ove-
 then they cry out, My Mountain Standeth str

shall never be moved ? And , 2. The rock of mi-
 belief and discouragement ; So that, when he hideth
 his face , and turneth back the face of his Throne,
 when they cry out , *Our hope and our strength is perished*
from the Lord ; we know not what it is to bear
 enjoyments by humility , nor our crosses by pa-
 tience and submission , O but misbelief and jealou-
 sy are bad interpreters of dark dispensations , they
 know not what it is to read these mysterious chara-
 cters of divine Providence, except they be written in
 legible characters of sense ; misbelief is big with
 a world of twins , and is travelling till bring forth apo-
 stasy and security ; and no doubt , he is a blessed
 Christian that hath overcome that woful idol of mis-
 belief , and doth walk by that Royal Law of the
 Lord , and not by that changeable rule of dispen-
 sations. We conceive that there are three great i-
 ds and Dagon of a Christian , that hindereth him
 from putting a blank in Christs hand concerning his
 going to Heaven , there is pride , self indulgence
 and security. Do we not covet to be more excellent
 than our Neighbour ? Do we not love to travel to
 Heaven through a valley of Roses ? And do we not
 ambitiously desire to walke toward Sion , sleeping
 rather then weeping) *as we go ?* Are there not
 many words that we would have taken out of the
 Bible ? That is sad Divinity to flesh and bloud,
through many tribulations must we enter into the King-
dom of Heaven : we love not to be changed from ves-
 sel to vessel , *that so our scent may be taken from us.*
 There are three great enemies of Christ : Misbe-
 lief, Hypocrisie, and Prophanity ; Misbelief is a
 proud sin, Hypocrisie is a silent sin, Prophanity is
 a crying sin. Those are mother evils , and I shall
 give you these differences betwixt them : Misbelief
 crucifieth Christ under the vail of humility, Hypo-

crisfe crucifieth Christ under the vail of love, profanity putteth him to open shame. Misbelieveth the love and power of God, Hypocrisie doth the Omniscieny of God, and Profanity denyeth Justice of God. Misbelief is a sin that looketh after inherent righteousness, hypocrisie is a sin that looketh after external holiness only, and profanity is a sin that looketh after heaven without holiness. Making connexion between these things that God always separate, and separating these things which hath always put together: so that their Faith once prove a delusion, and fly away as a dream at night. But let us study this excellent grace of saving Faith, which shall be a precious refuge against all those Christ-destroying and soul-debasing evils.

But now to come to that which we did put thirdly to be spoken of from the words, which shew the sweetness of this grace of Faith; no doubt, a pleasant command, and it maketh all commandments pleasant, it is that which casteth a divine lustre upon the most hard sayings of Christ, and maketh the Christian to cry forth, *God hath spoken in his holiness, I will rejoyce.* We need not stand long to clear that Faith is a sweet and refreshing command; for oftentimes recorded in Scripture to the advantage of this grace; and unspeakeable joy and heavenly delight are the hand-maids that wait upon it. But more particularly to make it out, we shall speak to these things. The first is, That this grace giveth a Christian a broad and comprehensive sight of Christ, maketh him to behold not only the beauty of his actions, but the beauty of his person: and there are these three particular sights that Faith giveth to a Christian of Christ: First, It letteth the Christian see Christ in his absolute personal excellency, taking him up as the eternal Son of God, as the Ancient of Days, as the Father of

ty, as the expresse Image of His Fathers Person, and
 brightness of his glory, and this filleth the soul
 with divine fear and admiration. Hence is that word,
 I. 1. 27. *That we see by Faith him that is invisible.*
 He had said, Faith is that grace that maketh
 things that are invisible, visible unto us. Secondly,
 it maketh the soul see Christ in his relative excellen-
 cy, that is, what he is to us; Faith taketh up Christ
 as our Husband, and from thence we are provoked to
 boldness and divine confidence, and withal, to
 these rich possessions that are provided for us by
 our Elder Brother, who was born for adversity; Faith
 taketh up Christ as a blessed Days man that did lay his
 head upon us both: And from thence is constrained
 to wonder at the condescendency of Christ, it taketh
 up as dying, and as redeeming us from the pow-
 er of the grave, and from the hands of our enemies;
 this provoketh Christians to make a total & absolute
 dedication of themselves over unto Christ, *To serve him*
the days of our life in righteousness, & holiness. And
 finally, Faith maketh the soul to behold these myste-
 rious draughts of spotless love, those divine emana-
 tions of love that have flowed from his ancient and
 everlasting love since the world began. Would you
 know the great ground why we are so ignorant of
 God, who is the study of Angels, and of all that are
 at the Throne? It is this, we are not much in
 the exercise of Faith. And if we would ask that
 question, What is the way to attain to the saving
 knowledge of God in Christ? We could give no
 answer to it but this, Believe, and again believe,
 and again believe: Faith openeth these mysterious
 things of his boundless perfection, and in some way
 openeth the Christian to answer that unanswerable
 question, *What is his Name, and what is his Son's*
Name?

There is this secondly that pointeth out the sweet-
 ness

acts of Faith, that it giveth an excellent relief to the promises, and maketh them food to our souls. What are all the promises without Faith (as a dead letter) but as a dead letter that hath no life ; but exercised upon the promises, maketh a Christian's life sweet. *The words of his mouth are sweeter unto me than honey and the honey comb,* as is clear from Heb. 11. 1. It is by Faith that we embrace the promises, and receive them.

Thirdly, The sweetness of Faith may appear in this, that it enableth a Christian to rejoyce in the most anxious and afflicting dispensations that meeteth with while he is here below; as is clear from Rom. 5. 1, 5. where his being justified by Faith is the fruit attending it, to *joy in tribulation*; likewise from Heb. 10. 34, 35. Doth not Christ hold the Crown in his right hand, and let every Christian behold these infinite dignities that are provided unto them after they have, *as a strong man* ~~their~~ *their* ~~race~~ ? And when a Christian is put into temptation ~~nace~~ *but seven times more then ordinary*, it becometh down the Son of Man Jesus Christ, to walk with *them in the furnace*; So that they walk safely with joy through fire and water, (and in a manner they can have no cross in his company. For ye know what is the description of a cross? It is to want Christ in any estate. And would ye know what is the description of prosperity? It is to have Christ in any condition or estate of life; Where ye want that have him, and what can ye have if ye want him, He is that All; so that all things beside him are but vanity. But besides this, Faith discovereth unto a Christian, that there is a sweet end of all his tryals and afflictions that he can be imposed unto; so that he can never say that of Job which Abab spake of Micajah, *He never prospered good things to me*, But rather he may say alwa

contrary, Faith never prophesieth evil unto me, it
giving a grace that prophesieth excellent things in the
darkest night, and sweetly declareth, that though weeping
do endure for the evening, yet joy cometh in the mor-
ning; And that, though now they go forth weeping,
carrying precious seed, yet at last they shall return rejoicing,
bearing sheaves in their bosome.

And this may bring in the fourth consideration to
set out the sweetness of Faith, That it giveth a
Christian a refreshing sight of that land that is afar
off, and maketh him to behold that inheritance that
is provided for the *Saints in light*; it goeth forth to
the brook *Eshcol*, and there doth pluck down those
fruits that grow in *Emanuel's Land*, to bring up a
good report upon that noble Countrey we are so-
journing towards, and the City, the Streets whereof
are paved with transparent Gold. And howbeit it
may be a perplexing debate between many and their
souls, whether or not these eyes that have been
polluted with windows through which so much uncleanness
have entred, and these species of lust have been con-
fused into the heart, shall once be like the eyes of a
virgin washed with milk and fitly set; and be admitted
to see that glorious object, *The Lamb that sitteth upon
his throne*: Or whether ever these tongues that have
been set on fire of hell; and these polluted lips that
have spoke so much against God, and Heaven, and
his people, and interests, shall ever be admitted
to sing these heavenly *Hallelujahs* amongst that spot-
less quier of Angels, and that *Assembly of the first*
born; or if these hands or feet that have been so
often used to commit iniquity, and so swift to run after
fornication, shall ever be admitted hereafter to carry these
Golden Branches, and to follow the *Lamb wher-
soever he goeth*; and whether ever these hearts that
have been indeed a *Bethaven*, a house of idols, may
notwithstanding, be a dwelling for the Holy Ghost.

Though

Though these things (we say) and such like are the subject of many sad debates to some weary and cause many *tossings to and fro till the morning* faith can bring all these mysteries to light , and *ing within the vail* , can let us see thousands of sands who were once as ugly as our selves , yet having *washed their robes, and made them white* *bloud of the Lamb*, are admitted to *stand before the* of God and serve him day and night.

Now there is that fourthly ; which we propose to speak of concerning this grace of Faith from words, and it is the absolute necessity that is of exercise of this grace, which is holden forth in that *his Commandment* ; which doth import these things; 1. That all the Commands that we can without this Commandment of Faith, it is but luting of our selves in the ditch till our own can abhor us. 2. That God taketh greater delight in exercise of that grace of Faith, then in the exercise of any other. And lastly, that as to the many instructions which we have in our obedience , the sweet act of oblivion pass of them all; if we make conscience seriously to obey this command of Faith is indeed, the sweet compend of the Gospel, and things do most clearly appear, in that believing is called, *His Commandment*, by way of excellence if this were his only Commandment.

But that we may yet a little more particularly set out the absolute necessity of Faith ; there are things that speaketh it forth to the full. It is as though rivers of tears should run down our cheeks because we keep not his Law , though we should rise off our knees from prayer, and should all day long speak to God with the tongue of Angels, yet should constantly obey his Commandment, we should never escape the punishment of communication from the presence of God.

word ; there being no action that doth proceed
 us which can please the Majesty of the Lord, un-
 hath its rise from this principle of Faith ; as is
 from Heb. 11. 6. *Without Faith it is impossible*
to please God. And though we should offer unto him
 thousand rivers of oyl , and thousands of rams,
 should offer up in a burnt Sacrifice all the beasts
 that are upon the mountains, and the trees that are upon
 the hills, this should be the answer that God should
 give unto us , *who hath required these things at your*
hands? I take no pleasure in these solemn sacrifices ; Be-
 cause there is no way of attaining peace with God, but
 through the exercise of Faith, making use of the spot-
 less righteousness of Christ. 2. Let us do our utmost,
 call all the inventions we can, to bring down our bo-
 dy and let us separate our selves from all the plea-
 sures of the flesh ; yet all our idols shall reign without
 contradiction , except once we do attain unto
 the grace of Faith, which is that victory, *whereby we*
overcome the world, and the hand that maketh use
 of infinite strength for subduing of corruption , ma-
 king the Christian sweetly to take up that song,
For he that is with us , than he that is in the
world.

From all this that we have said, both of the sweet-
 ness of Faith, and the necessity thereof , we would
 propose these few considerations , or two or three
 of persons. 1. There are some who live in
 a vain imaginary delusion of attaining Heaven
 through a Covenant of Works, and do neglect to seek
 salvation by Faith , in the righteousness of Christ.
 I would to these who build upon this sandy foundation,
 I shall say but these two words. First , How long
 will ye labour in the fire of any vanity ? Do ye ever
 think to put on the capstone ? know ye not that the
 day is approaching, when your house shall fall from
 your ears, your confidence shall be rejected, and your

hope shall vanish as a dream, and flee away as a vision of the night? Secondly, What a monstrousness, and what an unspeakable act of folly must to say, that Christ was crucified in vain? which ye do practically assert, when ye go about to put a righteousness through the works of the Law.

2. There are some who are secure in their thoughts concerning their faith: they never considered the reality of it, they never examined it. Ye whose Faith is as old as your selves, ye say ye never knew what it was to dispute, and I may say ye never knew what it was to believe. Thou proud hypocrite, let me tell thee, a strong faith, and strong idols, must needs be a strong delusion; thou wilt not obey the Lord, thou wilt not pray, thou wilt not believe a threatening in all the Word; thou wilt count all Religion madness and foolishness, and thou wilt persuade thy self thou believest in Christ. *O be not deceived, God is not mocked:* and why will ye mock your selves? Shall I tell you that Reprobates have a sad Religion, one day they must believe, obey, and pray, and give a testimony to Godliness, too late, and little to their advantage. Shall he whom all the Ministers on earth could scarce persuade to believe so much, as a heaven or hell, and one threatening in all the Book of God, at last be forced to believe their own sense, when they shall see the Ancient of Days upon the Throne, and shall hear the cries of so many thousand living witnesses come out both from heaven and hell, bearing testimony to the truth of threatnings and promises, that no jot of them is fallen to the ground, and he who will never be persuaded to bow a knee to God in all his life, shall he not then pray with greater fervency, that hills and mountains might fall upon him to cover him from the face of the Lamb? And he that will never submit to a command of God, must he not

they that dreadful Command, *Depart from me ye*
into everlasting torment, &c. Yea, he who was
greatest mocker in the world, shall then con-
fess, that they are blest who put their trust in the
Lord, as they are excellently brought in, though in
the Apocriphal Book, *wisd. c. 5. 4.* Crying out with
terror, while they behold that unexpected sight
of the glorious condition of the Godly. O here is the
end, say they, whom we mocked, whose life we ac-
counted madness, and their end dishonourable: Be-
lieve therefore in time, and do that willingly, which
ye must do by constraint, and do that with sweetness
and advantage, that ye must do at length with loss
and sorrow.

Thirdly, there are some who certainly have some
knowledge of eternal life, but contenteth themselves with
a small measure of assurance, and these I would be-
lieve, that ye would be more endeavouring to make
your calling and election sure, and would be endea-
vouring to see your names written in the ancient Re-
gisters of Heaven: And this we shall press upon you by
several Arguments. 1. Those strong and subtile, and
destroying delusions that are amongst many, who
perceive they do believe (as we were saying) and
behold in their own eyes; who yet are not purged from
their iniquities. O! are there not many of us that are
like a golden dream, that suppose we are eating, but when
we awake our soul is empty, whose faith is a metaphysick
reason, that hath no foundation, but mens apprehen-
sions, and this shall never bear us through the gates of
Heaven, nor convey us in into eternity of joy. 2. May
this press you to follow after assurance, that is a
expensive way to sweeten all your crosses: as is clear
in Hab. 3. 17, 18. where the convictions of this
the Habbakuk to rejoyce in the God of his salvation;
though the fig tree did not bear fruit, and the labour of
the

the olive did fail, and there were no sweetness to be in the vine, and from Heb. 10. 34. where they joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing themselves, that they had a better and an endurance: This is indeed that tree which if we come to the waters of Marah, they will presently be sweet, for it is not below the child of hope to be anxious about these things that he meets with when he sincerely knoweth that Commandments come forth, *Lift up your head*, for the day of your eternal redemption draweth near, even the day when the rivers of his sorrow shall sweetly run into the sea of everlasting delights. 3. A Christian is much in assurance, he is much in communion and fellowship with God, as is clear from the Song 1. 1 and Song 2. 3. where when once she cometh to be perswaded that Christ was her beloved, she sat down under his shadow, and his fruit was pleasant unto her taste; for the assured Christian has the taste of these crumbs that fall from that higher table, and no doubt, these that have tasted of that old bread will not straightway desire the new, because this is better. And then 4. It is the way to keep you from Apostacy, and making defection from God: For that grace which will make you continue with Christ in all his tentations, as is clear from, 2 Pet- 1. 10. where this is set down as a fruit of making our calling and election sure, that if we do these things we shall not fail; Faith makes a Christian to live a dependence for would you know the motto of a Christian? it is this, *self-diffidence*, and *Christ-dependence*, as is clear from that word, in the Song 8. 5. that while we are walking through this wilderness, we are leaning on our well beloved. 5. This assurance will help a Christian to overcome many tentations. There are many sorts of tentations that assault the Christian; there are temptations of desire, temptations of love,

ns of love, temptations of hope, and temptations of anxiety, all which, a Christian through this grace of assurance, may sweetly overcome; he hath once made Christ his own, what can he be but him? As Psa. 27. 4. *One thing have I desired of the Lord*: What can he love more then Christ, ye beside Christ, all his love being drowned, (as were) in that Ocean of his excellencies, and yet complacency found in the enjoyment of him? As to hope; will not assurance make a Christian worth, *Now Lord what wait I for? my hope is in*

And when the heart is anxious, doth not assurance make a Christian content to *bear the indignation of the Lord*, and patiently submit unto the cross, there is a sweet connexion betwixt his cross and crown, Rom. 8. 35, 36. *If he suffer with him, he shall reign with him*. And lastly, there is this argument leads you to assurance, that it sweetneth the thoughts of death; it maketh death unto a Christian, not the king of terrors, but the king of desires: and it is upon these grounds that assurance maketh death refreshing to a Christian. 1. He knoweth that it is the fulfilment of all his miseries, and the birth-day of all his present and eternal enjoyments. That it is the Coronation day of a Christian, and the day when he shall have that Marriage betwixt Christ and him sweetly sealed; And that when he is to step that last step, he knoweth that death will make him change his place, but not his company; And O that we could run in unto this, to seal that conclusion without exception, *My beloved is mine, and I am his*. We may without presumption, sing one of the songs of David while we are in this strange land, and tarried Christ in our armes, might sweetly cry forth, *Test thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation*. Comfort your selves in this, your clouds shall once pass away, and that that

that truth shal once come to pass which was com-
by the oath of an Angel , with his hand lifted
wards Heaven, *That time shal be no more.* Time shal
sweetly die out in Eternity, & ye may be looking
new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwell
teousness. O long to be with him, for Christ long
have you with him.

S E R M O N VI.

1 Joh. 3. 23. *This is his Commandment, that ye shal
believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ, &c.*

THere are three most precious and cardinal
graces which a Christian ought mainly to possess.
There is that exalting grace of Faith , the
supporting grace of Hope, and that aspiring grace of Love.
And if once a Christian did take up that heavenly
reference that is betwixt these sister-graces , he
be provoked to move after them most swiftly
in the chariots of *Aminadab* : And there is this difference
between these graces ; Faith is a sober and
grace : Hope is a patient and submissive grace
is an ambitious and impatient grace. Faith cryeth out,
O, my soul! be silent unto God. Hope cryeth out,
wait patiently for the Lord , *untill the vision
speak.* But Love, it cryeth out, *How long
coming?* And it is waiting to hear the sound of
feet coming over the mountains of separation.
the Motto of Hope, *Quod defertur, non aufertur*
which is delayed , saith Hope, is not altogether
ken away, and made voide: And that may be
divine embleme of the grace of Love ; It is
folding Desire in its arms , and it is desire
with wings, treading upon Delay and impediment.
There is this second difference between these

the grace of Faith, it imbraceth the truth of the promise: the grace of Hope, it imbraceth the goodness of the thing that is promised; but that exalting grace of Love, it imbraceth the Promises: Faith cryeth out, *Hath he spoken it? He will also do it:* Hope cryeth out, *Good is the word of the Lord, be true to thy Servant according to thy promise:* And Love, it cryeth with an higher Note, *As is the cedar tree amongst the trees of the wood, so is my well beloved amongst the sons.* Thirdly, There is that difference between these graces, Faith, it overcome temptations: Hope, it overcometh difficulties, Love stayeth at home and divideth the spoil: There is a sweet correspondence between those graces in this; Faith, it fighteth and conquereth; and Hope it fighteth and conquereth; but Love, it doth enjoy the Trophies of the victory. And, Fourthly, there is this difference, the noble grace of Faith, it shall never vanish into flight; That noble grace of Hope, it shall once vanish into possession and enjoyment; That constant grace of Love, it shall be the eternal companion of a Christian, and shall walk in with him unto the streets of the *New Jerusalem*. And I will ask you that question, What a day shall it be when Faith shall cede to flight? What a day shall it be when Hope shall yield its place to Love, and Love shall eternally sit down, and solace themselves in these blessed Mysteries, these everlasting conjunctions of Heaven, world without end. And fifthly, there is this difference, less will satisfy the grace of Faith, and the grace of Hope, then will satisfy the grace of Love; Faith it will be content with the Promise, and Hope will be content with the thing that is promised; but that ambitious grace of Love, it will be content with the Promiser; Love claspeth its arms about that precious and noble object Jesus Christ. It is a suspicious grace. It oftentimes cryeth forth,

They

They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him; So that Faith is oftentimes to resolve suspicions of love. I can compare these three graces to nothing so fitly, as to those three Worthies that *David* had, These three graces will break thorow all difficulties, were it an *Philistines*, that so they may pleasure Christ, and drink of the Well of *Bethlehem*, that Well of everlasting consolation that floweth from beneath the Throne of God: Love is like *Noah's* dove, It findeth rest for the sole of its foot, until once within that Ark, that place of repose. Jesus Christ.

And sixthly, There is this last difference between them, Faith taketh hold upon the faithfulness of Christ, Hope taketh hold upon the goodness of Christ, love, it taketh hold upon the heart of Christ. I think ye not it must be a pleasant and fowl rest, exercise, to be continually taken up in imbracing that is that eternal admiration of Angels. Must be an excellent life, and dayly to be feeding on the *finest of the wheat*, and to be satisfied with honey from *the rock*. O but heaven must be a pleasant place if once we would but taste of the first ripe grape, a cluster of wine that groweth in that pleasant mount, might not we be constrained to bring up a good report of it.

But now to come to that which I purpose to speak in at this time. The last thing concerning Faith, that we proposed from the words, was the object upon which Faith exerciseth it self, which I have set down to be *the Name of his Son Jesus Christ*. that we may speak to this more clearly, we shall speak a little to the negative, what things are not fit object of Faith, and then to the positive, what is how this Name of God, and of His Son Christ, is a sure ground, upon which a Christian may put his Faith: For the first, ye must know that a Christian

to build his Faith upon sense, nor sensible elements. Sense may be an evidence of Faith, but it not be the foundation of Faith; I know there are that oftentimes cry out, *Except I put my fingers in the Print of the nails, and thrust my hand into the side of his side, I will not believe:* and indeed it is a very unto the most part of us, to be exercising upon a naked word of Promise, abstracted from; to love an absent Christ, and to believe on an absent Christ, are the two great mysteries of Christianity. But that sense is no good foundation for Faith, appear, 1. That Faith which is builded upon sense is a most unconstant, a most fluctuating and transient Faith. I know sense hath its fits of love, and as sense hath its fits of Faith; Sometimes sense is weak of love, and sometimes sense is strong in Faith, ere six houres go about, sense may be sick of jealousy, and sick of misbelief, as you will see from *Psal. 124. 7. sense, that bold thing, it will instantly cry My mountain standeth strong, I will never be moved; but behold how soon it changeth its note, Thou hast turned thy face, and I was troubled. At one time it cryeth forth, who is like unto him that pardoneth iniquity, and that passeth over transgressions; but ere many houres go about, I will sing a song upon another, and cry out, why art thou become unto me as a liar, and as waters that fail?* 2. That Faith which is built upon sense, it wanteth the promise of blessedness for this is annexed to believing, that is founded upon the Word, according to that in *John 20. 29. And are those that have not seen, and yet have believed.* Nor hath that Faith that is built upon sense, such a joy waiting on it, as Faith that is built upon a naked word of promise, as may be cleared from *1 Pet. 1. 8. where Faith exercising it self on Christ not seen, maketh a Christian to rejoyce in joy unspeakable and full of glory, a joy that doth*

not

not attend believing, founded upon sense. Faith that is built upon sense, it giveth not glory to God, for Faith that is built upon sense, it exalteth not the Faithfulness of God, it exalteth not the Omnipotency of God. I will tell you what is the Divinity of sense; let me see, and then I will tell you, but it knoweth not what it is to believe upon sense, and because *the Lord hath spoken in his holiness* in effect, Faith that is built upon sense, is no more than as, Rom. 8. *Hope that is seen, is no hope*; therefore, when the Lord seeth a Christian build his Faith upon sense an idol, that he will not believe but will see and feel, this doth often provoke the jealousy of the Lord to withdraw himself from that Christian, and to deny him the sweet influences of heaven, and those consolations that are above, so that an instant he hath both his Sense, and his Faith to seek.

2. A Christian is not to make his graces the object of his Faith; that is, when a Christian doth build his Faith upon Love burning within him, when he doth build his Faith upon the influences to prayer increasing, and mortification increasing strong, he is not to build his Faith upon these, this was condemned in the Church, in Ezek. 31. compared with the 15. verse, *I made thee perfect by my comeliness*; but the use that thou didst make of it, *thou didst put thy trust in thy beauty*, and thou didst play the harlot. It is certain, that grace is the Object of our Faith, it doth provoke and quicken the lively exercise thereof, and to make a Christian oftentimes have that complaint; *wo to me that I am lean*, *my leanness testifieth to my face*. I will tell you three great mysteries in Christianity about Faith. The first is, to ride marches between these two, to deny what they have, and yet to be denied for what they have; many times, there is grace-denying, and not self denying; but this is that we would re-

you, to be denyed to grace, according to that which is recorded of *Moses*, *his face did shine*, *he knew it not*: he did misken it (as it were) was not at all puffed up with it; for so the words conceive may run. Secondly, It is a great difficulty for a Christian to be denyed to his self-denial, humble in his being humble: for if pride can have no other foundation, it will build it self upon humility; and a Christian will grow proud in this, when he is growing humble. Thirdly, It is a difficulty for a Christian to examine his growing in grace, and not be puffed up; It is certain, a Christian ought to examine his growth in grace humbly, according to *Psal. 63. 8. My soul followeth hard after thee, thy hand upholdeth me.* He doth not only take notice of this, that his soul did follow after God, but of the nature of that pursuit, *my soul followeth hard after* and yet sweetly acknowledgeth, it was not his own strength which carried him, nor his own hand that kept him from falling.

Ye are not to build your Faith upon your works, and upon the righteousness of the Law: need not stand long to refute that practical Popery which is amongst us, that thinketh we can go to Heaven through a Covenant of works. I told you not long since, what your going to Heaven through a Covenant of Works speaketh, even this horrid blasphemy; that it was an act of monstrous folly to send Christ to die for sinners; for, if you can go to Heaven without him, was not then Christ crucified in vain. I would tell you now, that this speaketh out your damnable ignorance of the weakness and defectiveness of your own hearts. O ye that are so great defenders of Salvation, by the Covenant of works, I beseech you, What is the reason that ye make the Covenant of Works oftner then any; for there is none that thinketh they will go to Heaven
this

this way , but those that are the greatest by the Covenant of Works. And is not that inconsistent and contradictory divinity , your faith contrary to your practice, and your practice telling you Faith is a lie.

Fourthly , We must not mix our own righteousness with Christs, as the object of our believing is indeed an evil that often lodgeth in the heart of the most refined hypocrite , when Satan prevails to exclude Christ altogether, then content with that whorish woman , to *divide* and let the object of our Faith be half Christ half of *self* ; And the truth is , many of the unwise sons, who stay long in the place of the bringing forth of children , do willingly hearken to the overture , for fear it be presumption for such wretches to meddle too boldly with the righteousness of Christ , but it were good such we would consider that word , *Rom. 10. 2.* where the Holy Ghost calleth the making use of his righteousness, an act of submission , *They have not faith he) unto the righteousness of Christ.* ye not lay this to heart , that our Lord will receive believing , or your putting on his righteousness as an act of great humility , and will take your belief as a marvelous act of the highest presumption.

Fifthly , We are not to make providence the object of our Faith. I know there are some that lay the ground of their right to Heaven, they will say that God hath been kind to them all their days, and would only say to such, *He may be feeding you this day of slaughter , and no man knoweth love or any thing that is before him.* This much of the use of Faith negatively.

And now to speak to it positively , where the Text holdeth out Christ himself as that c

ompleat object of Faith ; *This is his Command-
that we believe on the Name of his Son : and thus
closeth with Christ in a fourfold consideration,
it closeth with God in Christ , not with God
diately and nakedly ; for he dwelleth in light
fible , that no man can approach unto ; He is high-
the Heaven , what can we do ? and deeper then
what can we know ? Job 11. Therefore we must
ach unto him through a vail ; even the vail of
His flesh, Heb. 10. God is a consuming fire, and
eyes then that he can behold iniquity : and there-
e must first cast our eyes upon that blessed Days
that laid his hand upon us both ; and look upon
in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, and
w near unto him through a Mediator, who is the
d the last , and he that liveth and was dead,
alive for evermore , able to save to the utter-
all that come unto God by Him, seeing he liveth
er to make intercession for them. Secondly,
closeth with Christ, as tendered freely in a Co-
of promise. We would have had nothing to
h Christ , if he had not been given of the Fa-
and offered himself in a free Covenant of pro-
but he being thus holden forth upon terms of
ve (which doth utterly abominat hire) and so
a proclamation issued forth under the great
Heaven , *That whosoever will , may come and
of the water of life freely.* Upon this the poor
re draweth near by vertue of a right , and
ing out the arms of most enlarged affections,
an upon him with that joyful shout, *my Lord,*
: and then maketh an absolute resignation of
to him ; which is holden out in the Scripture
sweet expresseion of *kissing of the Son.* And
re three parts of Christs blessed Body, that the
ian must endeavour to kiss and embrace : the
E
mouth*

mouth of Christ, the hand of Christ. and of Christ : the kissing of his feet importeth exercise of love, the kissing of his hands the exercise of subjection, and the kissing of his mouth the exercise of communion and fellowship with him. Thirdly, Faith closeth with Christ as the purchase meritorious cause of all the good we receive: no person that hath purchased all these things with the blood of Christ, there is not one blink of love, there is not the least enjoyment that a Christian meeteth with, but it is the price of the blood of Christ ; Christs blood was laid down for it. Fourthly, Faith closeth with Christ as the efficient and worker of all our mercies ; all our enjoyments are from Him the efficient cause, that is, He is the worker of all good things in us, it is his precious fingers that accomplish that blessed work of grace, and from Christ as the dispenser of these things is the great Steward of Heaven that doth communicate unto Believers all the Treasures of the House ; For him hath God the Father sealed that word that Christ once spake, is manifested by Himself. *It is more blessed to give, than to receive.* Christ is that fountain and treasure in which all our gifts and graces are treasured up ; for the blessing come to Believers they come from Him as the Head, according to that word, *2 Cor. 12. 9. Which grace was given to us in him, before the foundations of the world were laid.* It was given before the World was made, and for that it might be communicated unto all his Church, and so out of His fulness we all receive, and so for grace.

But, secondly, The Text holdeth forth particularly this excellent object of Faith, the Name of his Son, *That ye believe in the Name of his Son.* And here indeed we may be at a

ng since *Agur* did *non plus* all the world with
 question, *what is his Name, and what is his*
Name, if thou canst tell? O how little a thing
 be known of Him! And O how brutish is this
 ration! that know not so much loss, then might be
 n of Him in such a day of the Gospel. But that
 may speak a little, according to our weak measure
 aith, as closing with the *Name* of Christ, His
 e is his glorious Attributes, by which he re-
 th so much of Himself in the Scriptures as poor
 als can take up. We did shew you before, that
 was three of these that were the main pillars of
 ying Faith, *Faithfulness, Omnipotency, and*
finite Love and Mercy. And how from these
 be answered all the objections of sense, of car-
 eason and of misbelief, arising from convicti-
 f unworthiness. And certain it is, that Faith
 irs conflicts, maketh much use of the Names
 rist. And there is not an objection that a poor
 ted soul can make, but Faith can frame an an-
 to it, out of some of these excellent Names of
 or of his Son Christ. It would be a more
 me work, than I intend, to let you see this in
 But I shall only instance that in *One glorious*
of God, by which he proclaimeth his glory,
 34. *The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and*
us, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness
uth; Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving
ty, transgression and sin, and that will by no
clear the guilty, &c. I think there are seven
 ary objections which may be answered from that
 First, is it an ordinary objection which mis-
 ers do make, that they are under the strength
 ir corruption: that they are black as the *Tents*
lar, and not beautiful as the Curtains of Solo-
 And doth not the first letter of that Name
 r this, that he is a *merciful Lord*: the one
 E 2 importing

importing his ability to save, and to bring
 high imagination? The other importing,
 delight to help those who have no strength
 under the power of their adversaries,
 of God being of no larger extent than his
 is that second objection of misbelief, that
 nothing to commend us to Christ; But
 have to boast of, are infirmities and impe
 and this is abundantly answered from that
 ter of his Name, that he is gracious, whic
 eth the freedom of the dispensations of his
 he walketh not with us according to that
 rit, but according to that golden and exc
 of Love. It is a great dispute whether Mercy
 be the greatest wonder, whether the Love
 or the freedom of it, be the greatest mystery
 these put together make up a matchless wond
 ly, Misbelief wil object that we have forsaken
 without number, and that we cannot trace
 apostacy unto the first day of its rise; and
 abundantly answered from that letter of h
 that he is long suffering? *This being that g*
tribute in God, the glory of which he desireth
se above all his Name. Fourthly, Misbelie
 dinarily propose this objection, that we ha
 plied our transgressions, and have commit
 doms under every green Tree; and have given
 lovers even hiring our idols, so that we ma
 that lamentation, *Is not our sin great, and*
gression infinite? And is not this also answ
 that letter of his Name, that he is abund
 ness? That though sin abound in us, yet
 much more superabound in him. We c
 deed, that there are some that may walk
 condition, that if they had no other exercise
 out eternally, but to make confession,

and never make any needless repetition; And in some respect, it is a mercy that we are My-
unto our selves ; for if we did know com-
the *seven* abominations of our hearts , and
mysterious actings of the body of death , we
be in hazard to choole *strangling and death*,
then life ; Yet may not one glimpse of that
ant goodness satisfie us , and calm the storm ?
y, faith misbelief, we know that we have bro-
r vowes and covenants with God , and that all
things that we have taken on , have been but
before the fire of temptation, so that we have
pe that he will have mercy upon those that
roken wed-lock , and have not been stedfast
covenant. But is not that abundantly answer-
a that letter of his Name, *That he is abundant*
; which speaketh that , That though we
ur selves, yet he abideth faithful , and doth
er the words that hath gone out of his mouth.
e infinite blessedness of man , that though he
geable , yet they have to do with one that
changeable being. Sixthly , There is that
on , That notwithstanding all these things
tters of encouragement to some , yet they
not whether or not the lot of everlasting Love
llen upon them; And whether their names be
ncient records of Heaven. But this is answer-
n that letter of his Name , *He keepeth mercy for*
ds, which sheweth us that great number of those
hom the lot of everlasting Love shall fall; And
were no other sentence in all the Scripture,
ght be a sufficient matter of a song, and might
s cry out, *who is like unto him, whose compassions*
end ? And who desires to *magnifie his mercy*
at his works; and lastly, misbelief maketh this
on , they have sinned not only against light,

not only against vows, not only after judgement of God, but even after the application threatening ; So that they conceive, *that they will not have mercy upon such.* Yet this is answered likewise from that letter of his *Ne forgiveth iniquity, transgression and sin ;* whose words do abundantly speak forth, that the transgression which he will not pardon ; the but one particular amongst all that innumerable number of sins which lodgeth in the heart of men, that he declared unpardonable : and none of our diseases that is above the influence of Love ; and concerning which we can take complaint, *There is no Balm in Gilead, and is no Physician there.* And though providence muster up many impossibilities, yet let for the promise in the one hand, and impossibility the other, and desire God to reconcile them. If we cannot see any connexion between promise and the word, yet may we reflect upon the potency of God, that can make things seeming contrary, sweetly agree together ; the commentary will never destroy the Text, nor promise will never destroy the faithfulness of God. let me give you this advice, that those objections of misbelief which you cannot answer, in any manner putteth you to a *non plus*, and when you have looked over all the *Names of God*, ye cannot give an answer to them, slight them and cover them up as we have often told you, was the practice of unbelieving Abraham, Rom. 4. 19. where the objection of misbelief appearing before his *deadness of his body*, and the *barrenness of Sarah* it is recorded of him, *he considered not these things* if it were, he had a divine transition from the objections of misbelief to the acting of Faith : And is clear from Mat. 15. 25, 26. where that strong

misbelief being proposed against that woman, he was not within the compass of Christs compass, she hath a noble way of answering with this *have mercy upon me.* And (if so we may speak) hath a kind of divine impertinency in answering the objections of misbelief, or rather a holy sing of them that gaineth the victory, when casting with temptations will not do it: The like alway be instanced in his Sons name: O how glorious titles are given to that *Prince of the Kings of the*, and to that *Plant of renown*, upon which the best faith may cast anchor, and ride out the great storm. I shall not detain you long on this subject; this we would have you know, that there is no great or difficulty that a Christian can be exposed unto; but there is some name or attribute of Christ may sweetly answer that difficulty, and make up the disadvantage. Is a Christian exposed unto afflictions and troubles in a present world, let him comfort himself in this, that *Christ is the shadow of a great rock in a wearied land.* Is a Christian under lowliness and vexation of mind, let him comfort himself in this, that *Christ is the God of peace & of all consolation.* Is a Christian under darknes and confusion of spirit, let him comfort himself in this, that *Christ is the father of light, and is the eternal wisdom of God.* Is a Christian under the convictions of this, that he is under the power and dominion of his lusts, let him comfort himself in this, that *Christ is redemption*; yea (I stay no longer) if it were possible that a Christian could have a necessity that he could not find answer in Christ to answer it, he may lawfully frame an answer to Christ out of any promise in all the book of *Psalm*, & he should find it forth-coming for the relieving and making up of that necessity, God would not disappoint his expectation.

object of Faith, which we shall desire you to practice of ; and it is the way of Faiths close noble object , and its resting on him : As conceive may be excellently taken up by considering of the many several names that Faith in Scripture , beyond any other of the gifts of the Spirit. It is called looking , *Isai. 45. 22. I will be to me : It is called abiding in Christ, Joh. 15. I will abide in me : It is called a keeping silence unto God, Psal. 37. 7. My soul trust in God ; Or as the words of the Original, My soul be silent unto God ; and Psal. 62. 1. My soul waiteth ; Or as the words of the Original, my soul is silent unto God. Likewise, Faith is called leaning, Psal. 7. 15. I have leaned upon thee from my mothers womb. Faith it is called an eating of Christ, Joh. 6. 53. Faith is called a casting of our burden upon God, Psal. 55. 22. Cast your burden upon God. Faith, It is called, a coming unto God, Mark 16. 7. And according to these different names , we may observe seven noble properties , and matchless differences of this Grace of Faith ; The first is , That this grace by which a Christian doth enjoy much communion with God : Hence it is called a looking importeth , that Faith is a continual contentment of the immortal soul , upon that precious and silent object Jesus Christ. There is that second property of Faith. That it is that grace by which communion with God is maintained : Hence it is called an *abiding in God*. It is that grace which keeps Christ and the believer to dwell together. The third property of Faith is, that it is a most silent grace ; Hence it is called a *keeping silence unto God*. Faith as it were, it knoweth not what it is to look upon it is the noble excellency of Faith , it never knew what it was to misconstrue Christ, it is the excellency of Faith, it never knew what it was to make an evil report upon Christ. Faith, it will prom*

to a Christian in the darkest night; for, when
 asketh Faith that question, *Isai. 21. 11, 12.*
men, what of the night? watchmen, what of the
Or, when shall the morning break? Faith
reth it with the words that follow (only a little
ing the order) The night cometh and also the morn-
the morning is approaching, that admitteth
following night. There is that fourth proper-
Faith, it is the grace that keepeth a Christian
everance, by its building upon the Rock.
it is called a leaning upon God: For a Chri-
y Faith doth perpetually joyn himself to Christ,
whatever trouble he be cast into by Faith, he
h out of that wilderness leaning upon his beloved,
Faith he is led up to the rock that is higher
, where he may sit in safety, and even laugh
and destruction, when assailing him. There
fifth property of Faith: that it is the grace
ringeth satisfaction unto the spiritual senses of
Christian, by a close and particular application of
as the nourishment of the soul. Hence it is cal-
eating of the flesh of Christ. There are three
that Faith satisfieth; Faith satisfieth the sense
t, it satisfieth the sense of taste, and it satisfi-
the sense of touch: Faith it will make a Christi-
ple that eternal word of life: Faith will make
Christian see that noble plant of renown: And Faith
ake a Christian taste and see how gracious the
. And no doubt, those that have once satisfi-
their fight, they will be longing to satisfie their
There is that sixth property of Faith. It is
ace which giveth rest unto a Christian: Hence
called a casting of our burthen upon him: It is, as
, the soul giving unto Christ that unsuppor-
yoak of our iniquities, and taking from Christ
and portable yolk of his Commandments.
eventhly, There is that last property of Faith;

it is that grace by which Sanctification is promised. Hence it is called a *coming to Christ*: It is the same as a divine motion and travelling from the land of *Egypt* unto the land of *Canaan*: Faith is the same as a pleasant motion from the land of the north, the land of our captivity, unto the land of perfect liberty, long going out by the footsteps of the flock and entering in that new and living way, even in him who is the way, the Truth and the Life.

And now for a more full application of this I shall speak but to two things further. 1. We have it considered, that there are some that come to the Covenant of Promise with less difficulty, and after a more divine and evangelick way; there are some that close with Christ, in a more difficult and legal way; there are some that before they can come to mount Sion they must dwell fourty years at mount Sinai. There are some, before the door of heaven shall be given to them, they must roar like a lion, and must cover themselves with sackcloth and ashes upon their heads. We must be a *Benjamin*: that is, we must be a *Benjamin* before we be a *Benjamin*: that is, we must be a *Benjamin* before we can be a son of consolation. This is certain, that Christ leadeth sometimes some of himself through a valley of roses: & I would only you taking notice of these two, which though we receive they be not infallible in the rule, yet sometimes experience maketh them out to be true. There are three sorts of persons who are most ordinarily brought under great terror, ere they close with Christ. First, These who have committed some great and abominable sin that is most contradicting to the light of nature. Secondly, That person that is much against light; before conversion. He is observed in all the Books of the Gospel, and in the book of the *Acts*, there was more Gospel and way of converting the Gentiles, then was of con-

g the Jews, see *Act. 2. 37.* there is a sharp Law exercised among them who had crucified the Lord of life, and *Act. 9. Paul* that had been a grievous persecutor, at his conversion, he is first stricken dead to the world before he be made a captive of the love of Christ, and constrained to cry out, *What wilt thou have to do* but look to *Act. 8. & chap. 19.* and there ye will find a more fair and smooth way of begetting sons to Christ. And, thirdly, that person that is much in content of his own righteousness, he useth to be brought to Christ through much terror and exercise of the Law: that is clear in *Paul*, his condition also, *Phil. 3.* and *2. 9.* compared, and certainly, whoever thinketh to come that length in self-abasement, and will count as the Apostle doth in that chapter, must dwell many days at *Mount Sinai*, and learn his Arithmetick here. 2. We would have you taking notice of this, that though the person that is brought to Christ in a more smooth and evangelick way may have the pre-eminency of the person that is brought to Christ by a more legal and terrible way in some things, yet we conceive, that a Christian that is brought to Christ through much of the exercise of the Law, and through many of the thundrings of mount Sinai, after he hath come to see his right of Christ, he is more constant in the exercise of Faith; and the reason of it is, because that an ordinary ground of misbelief is our distinct uptaking either of the time of our conversion, which is oftentimes hid from these persons that are converted in a more evangelick way, as likewise this, that those persons that are brought to Christ by a more Gospel chariot, are sometimes put to doubts, whether ever they were under the exercise of the Law, and this maketh them often (as it were) to raze the foundation, and to cry forth, *My hope, and my strength, is perished from the Lord.* And how

now to shut up our discourse, we shall add the word of exhortation ; that ye would carefully hold upon that noble object, and exercise yourselves upon him; and I shall say but this, that all that have this noble grace of Faith, and that are heirs of that everlasting inheritance : There is a *for* Crown prepared for you ; There is a Crown that is prepared for him that shall *fight that good* of Faith ; but what may you say is a Crown except we have joy waiting upon that Life; for is Life without Joy, but a bitterness, and a burden to itself ; Therefore ye shall have *a crown of* but what were a crown of Life, and a crown except we had the grace of Holiness, and were pleat in that ; Therefore, ye shall have also *a of righteousness* : But what were Life, Joy, Righteousness, without Glory : Therefore ye have likewise *a crown of Glory* : But what of all if that crown should once fall from our head, and should be deprived of our Kingdom ? Therefore take this to make up all the rest, it is *an crown of Glory*, That word in Prov. 27. *no* close, *The crown saith Solomon, doth not endure* : But this precious Crown that the head Christ shall fix upon the head of an overcoming Christian, this is the motto that is engraven on it, *unchangeable and Eternal, Eternal and changeable*. And O what a day suppose ye shall be, when that precious Crown shall be put upon heads? What think ye will be the difference between Christ and the Believers in Heaven? They shall have these four crowns which are indeed one : but shall have upon his head many Crowns, according to that word, Rev. 19. 12. But let me say once also to you who are strangers from God, and destitute of the grace of Christ, and will Faith close with this excellent object, There is

crown that once shall be put upon your heads,
 do not misinterpret the vision: There is a difference
 betwixt the *Butler* and the *Baker*; ye may
 have good things to your selves, but there is a
 crown of death which ye shall once have put upon
 your heads; ye shall be always dying, and never able
 to live: There is a crown of sorrow that ye shall have
 upon your heads, when ye shall eternally sigh forth
 lamentation; *O to be annihilate and reduced unto
 nothing*; when the reduction of you into nothing
 shall be a heaven, when ye shall be tormented in
 everlasting flames. And I would say this by the
 way, ye will be all miserable, and comfortless one to
 another, there will be no ground of consolation that
 ye shall reap, for the community of your sorrow shall
 increase the degrees of that sorrow; And there is a
 yet another crown also that ye shall put on, and that is a
 crown of *sin*, instead of that *crown of righteousness*:
 would ye know your exercise. O ye that are predesti-
 nate unto these everlasting pains? Would ye know
 your exercise? It is this, ye shall eternally *blaspheme*
 and *curse* the God that made you. I am perswaded
 of this, that the terrours of hell will afflict you more,
 through the exercise of sin, than that of the sinning perpetually in hell:
 would ye think nothing many of you to be in hell,
 where there were no pain there; for the exercise of sin
 shall be your delight and life: but be perswaded of
 this, that when your conscience is awaked, the exer-
 cise of sinning shall exceedingly aggravate your pain.
 There is this crown lastly, that ye shall put on,
 that is the *crown of shame*: The Prophet *Isaiah*
 maketh mention of a *crown of pride*; but ye that have
 on that crown of everlasting confusion and shame,
 ye shall not be able to lift up your eyes to him
 whom ye have pierced; I would fain desire you to
 know, what will be your exercise at these three days;
 what will be your exercise when death shall be sum-
 monding

monding you to remove, and ye shall first be
 heirs unto these everlasting pains ; I am perswaded
 ye will reflect much : will ye not reflect upon
 Sermons that ye have heard , wherein ye have
 invited to partake of the sweet offers of Salvation
 remember of one that upon his death bed cryed
A world for time , a world for one inch of time
 that perhaps did hold his head high, and none
 was greater than the greatest here , his crown
 not purchase one inch of time , but dying with
Call time again, call time again; that petition was
 denyed, and so shall it be, I fear; to the most part
 are here , I think it was a pretty Hieroglyph
 the *Egyptian* , they painted Time with three heads
 The first head that painted out Time that was
was a greedy Wolf gaping , which importeth
 That our Time past was mispent , and there
 nothing left , but like a Wolfe to gape for it again
 And there was that second head of a *roaring*
round, which imports the time present, and for
 end was so painted, that people might lay hold
 their present opportunities otherwise: it would be
 matter of their ruine , and of their eternal undoing
 And there was that last head , which was a *deceitful*
Dog fawning ; which signifieth , that people
 deceive themselves with the time to come , thinking
 they will be religious at their death , and that
 will overcome at their death , but this is flatter
 better then the fawning of a mad Dog. I think we
 learn much of this , even to be provoked to lay hold
 upon our golden opportunities, that we sell not
 time, but that we buy it. There are two things
 a Christian must not sell, that is, sell not *the truth*
 buy it, and sell not *your time*, but buy it. I am perswaded
 of this, that one moment of Time is worth ten
 thousand worlds, if improved; And I would ask you
 advantage shall ye have of all things that ye have

ed your selves about, when time shall be no more
pose indeed, this is an ordinary evil amongst
people of this age, of which we have our own
and portion. There are many that envy God-
s, and the Godly, *the excellent ones that are in*
earth, that think it is pleasure to vent their
ce against such; I know that ordinary practice, it
der by a thousand years then themselves, that
persecute Godliness under the name of hypo-
e; They call Godliness hypocrisie, and upon
account they begin and speak maliciously against
only I would ask you this question, what will
say in that day when Christ will ask that questi-
t you, that *Gideon* asked at *Zeba* and *Zalmuna*, who
these that ye killed with your tongue? Must it
be answered, *Every one did resemble the person of*
ing? O will ye not believe! will ye not close
Christ? I know it is ordinary that we run up-
e two extreems, Sometimes we do not believe
threatnings of the Law, and sometimes we will
believe the promises of the Gospel. But I would
desire to know, what if it had been so ordered
the infinite wilddom of God, that all the Letters
his Book should have been threatnings; what
old have been our lot; if all the Promises should
e been scraped out of it; But certainly this must
our lot, all the promises of the Book of the Co-
ant shall be taken from you, and all the curses
eof shall be a flying Roll, that shall enter within
t houses, and shall there eternally remain. Know
, O ye that are enemies to Christ, know it, and
k upon it. *Every battel of the warriour is with*
sed noise, and with garments rolled in blood: But
war that Christ shall have against the hypocrites in
n, and those that are ignorant of him, and will not
e with him, it shall be *with jewel of fire and eter-*
indignation. O what will be your thoughts, sup-
pose

pose you, when Christ shall come with that
ed sword of the fury of the Lord, to enter
with you? It is no delightfome exercise. O
were not *almost*, but *altogether perswaded to be*
ans, and that once Christ might conquer you
that two edged sword that proceedeth out of his
that so you might subject your selves to Him, and
Him the object of your Faith. Now to Him the
engraven upon His vesture, and on his thigh, the
the King of kings, and the Lord of Lords, we do
give praise.



A S E R M O N

Concerning the

G R E A T S A L V A T I O N.

Heb. 2. 3. *How shall we escape if we neglect so great
vation, which at the first began to be spoken
Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that
him.*

THis everlasting Gospel, which is preached
you, is that glorious Star, which must lead
the place where blessed Christ doth lie. This
and glad tydings of this great salvation, is come
unto you; And Christ is standing at the ever
doors of your hearts, desiring that ye would open
to him. There is that one great request which
ven, this day hath to present unto you, and it is
ye would at last embrace this great salvation,
offered by him. It is the thing for which ye
led to mourn this day, that since the days of y
thers, and since the beginning of your own da

stopped your ears from that sweet and chaunt-
 ice of this blessed Charmer, *Ye would never dance*
when he piped , neither would ye weep to him
 he lamented.

to come to the words which we have read un-
 ; The Apostle in the former Chapter hath been
 arsing most divinely of the matchless and incom-
 le excellencies which are in our blessed Lord
 ; And in the first verse of this second Chapter,
 aweth forth an exhortation from his former Do-
 e, which in short, is this, That they would take
 to the blessed Doctrine of the Gospel; *And not at*
me to let it slip out of our minds , and that they
 keep this Gospel as a Jewel of great price, and
 not sell it, but that they would be induced to
 . And this Exhortation he presseth by two Ar-
 guments.

The first Argument is in the second verse , where
 th, *If the word spoken by Angels was steadfast, and*
transgression and disobedience received a just recom-
of reward, &c. That is, if the transgression of
 law , which was delivered but by the Ministry
 of Angels, and every disobedience to it was so severe-
 punished, Let that provoke you to take heed, that
 ye neglect not the precious Gospel which was spo-
 ken by the Lord himself.

The second Argument is in the words which we
 read unto you , and it is taken from the certain
 infallible stroak of the Justice of God, which shall
 come upon those who slight this great salvation; It is
 written (saith he) that there can be a city of refuge
 for those who slight this great salvation.

Now in the words which we have read, there are
 six things to be considered.

First, That it is an evil incident to the hearers
 of this precious Gospel and Great Salvation, to slight
 and undervalue it ; This is clearly presupposed in
 the

the words, otherwise there had been no ground of access for the Apostle to threaten so terribly against the slighers of it.

II. The second thing to be considered in the words is, That the stroke and ruine of those who slight this great salvation, is certain, and infallible, it will come upon them: This is clear from these words, *How shall we escape?* As if he had said, there is no imaginable way for us to escape, if we neglect this so Great Salvation: we may have a city of refuge when we are pursued by the Law; or, when we are pursued by afflictions, and we may escape when we are pursued, otherwise by the Justice of God: if once we slight this great salvation, there remains no city of refuge (no door of escape left open) for us: for where will the person flee that hath slighted this great salvation?

III. There is this third thing whereof we shall take notice from the words, That the stroke of the Justice of God cometh justly upon them who slight this great salvation; and truly it is a most equal and reasonable stroke, which is also clear from the words, *How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?* where he puts it home to their consciences, as if he had said, think ye not that it is just and right that (if ye slight this great salvation) there should be a door of escape left open unto you? He puts the question home to their conscience to answer yes or no.

IV. The fourth thing to be considered in the words is this, That the slighting this great salvation is a sin that hath many aggravations, which attend and increase upon it. And it hath two aggravations from the words which I have read; The first great aggravation is that word of the Text, *Great Salvation*, as if he had said, if it were not a Great Salvation, ye might have some cloak or excuse for your slighting of it:

if it is such a great and eternal salvation, there
 is no cloak left for your sin. The second aggra-
 vation is from the certainty of this Salvation, in these
 words, *which at first began to be spoken by the Lord,*
was confirmed unto us by those that heard him, viz.
apostles, whereby he telleth them, this great
 salvation is no notion nor fancy; but a most certain,
 and real salvation which yet they slight.

The fifth thing whereof we shall take notice
 of the words, is this, That there are no persons
 (who they will, Minister or people) who slight
 great salvation, that shall have a door of escape,
 but it is it, that the Apostle putteth himself among
 the rest, saying, *How shall we escape if we neglect so
 great salvation? That is, How shall I Paul escape, if
 I neglect so great salvation; and so frustrate the grace
 of God?*

Sixthly, We would take notice of this from
 the words, That not only heart-despising of this
 salvation, but even also the neglecting of it, hath
 a most infallible and unspeakable ruling attending
 it.

Now before we speak to any of these six things
 (which we have observed from the words) There are
 two things whereunto we shall speak a little for
 clearing of the words. First, What is meant here
 by *Great Salvation*; Secondly, How is it said that
 Paul was *first Preacher of it*.

First. we conceive that by the great salvation, is
 understood the Gospel, as is clear, *Eph. 1. 13.* Where
 it is called, *the Gospel of our salvation*, and *Acts 13.*
 it is called *the word of this salvation*; So that by the
 word of this Salvation, is understood the Gospel, and
 the precious offers which are contained in it. And
 we conceive, it may be called a Great-Salvation, in
 eight respects.

I. First,

I. First, It is called the great salvation, in respect of the price that was laid down for it; There is no less price laid down to purchase this great salvation, then the *blood of the Son of God*. From whence then doth Salvation flow unto you? It comes unto you in a stream of the blood of the Son of God. This is clear, *Heb. 9. 12. Neither by the blood of calves and calves; but by his own blood he entered into the holy place, obtained eternal redemption for us.*

II. Secondly, It is called a great salvation, in respect of the many difficulties and oppositions which lie in the way of bringing it about. What great impediments (suppose ye) lay in Christs way, when he could accomplish and bring about this great salvation? Was not the Justice of God to be satisfied? Was he not to die, and be made like unto one who is dead? Was he not to lie in the grave? And was he not to bear the torments of hell, before this great salvation could be accomplished and brought to pass? There were such impediments in the way of bringing about this great salvation, that if all the Angels in Heaven had been set to the work, they had been all overcome under it, had it been but that one great impediment to satisfy the Justice, and pacify the wrath of God; even that was a p^{er}il, through which none could pass but the eternal Son of God; It was so guarded, that none durst adventure to enter it (much less could any win through it) save he only, *who was made to save.*

III. Thirdly, It is called a great salvation, in respect of that high estimation which the Saints have of it. O what an high estimation have the Saints of Gospel Salvation! There is no mercy which they think comparable to this, all other mercies are but little *Zoars* in comparison of this great Mercy of Gospel Salvation.

Fourthly, It is called a great salvation, in respect of these noble effects, which this Salvation bringeth about, and produceth. Some of the great effects of the Gospel, *David* hath cleared, *Psal.* 19. 7, 10. Is not this a great effect, (of this Gospel Salvation) to bring us out of nature into an estate of grace? that is an effect of this great salvation? Is not this a great effect, to make us who were enemies, become friends? And that is an effect of this great salvation; Is not this a great effect, to make us who were moving in the way to hell, move in the way to heaven? And that is an effect of this great salvation: Is not this a great effect, to make us who were far off, now made near? And yet that is an effect of this great salvation. And is not this a great effect, to make us who were darkness, to become light in the Lord? And is not this the great effect of this Gospel salvation? Yea, I say, time would fail me to tell of all the great effects of this great salvation; But O will ye come hither, and that will best resolve the question unto you, what the noble effects of this great salvation

Fifthly, It is called a great salvation, in respect of the great advantages which doth redound to the person who imbraceth it. First, Is not Heaven a notable advantage? and that is the gain, which attendeth the imbracers of this great salvation. Secondly, Is not Jesus Christ a notable advantage? yet he is the advantage which attendeth the imbracers of this great salvation: Thirdly, Is not eternal communion with God a notable advantage? that advantage attendeth the imbracers of this great salvation. Fourthly, Is not eternal liberation from the body of death, a great advantage? And that attendeth the imbracers of this great salvation. Fifthly, Is not eternal living in the enjoyment of God a great advantage? and that attendeth the imbracers

bracers of this Salvation. Sixthly, Is not etern-
ing of God as he is , a great and noble adv-
And yet this (as all the former) attendeth the
cers of this great salvation. Would ye be hono-
Come and imbrace this great salvation. Would
eternally happy ? O then come and partake
great salvation.

VI. Sixthly, It is called a great salvation in
of all other Salvations that ever were accom-
There was never a salvation , or victory obtain-
any General or Captain (unto a Land or People
could have the name of great salvation in compar-
of this.

VII. Seventhly, It is called a great salvation
respect of the Authority of it. We have spoken
greatness (as to the meritorious cause) of it, and
great things it doth effectuate : and also in res-
the authority of it, it is a great salvation. We
know who is the author of this great salvation
Christ, *Heb. 5. 9. He became the Author of etern-*
vation to all them that obey him. And must not
vation be suitable to him who is the Author of
is one of the most noble and irradiant beams
Majesty of the Son of God the Mediator ,
the Author of this great salvation.

VIII. Eighthly , It is called a great salvation
respect of the continuance and duration of it. It
a salvation which is but for a day : but it is an
Salvation , *Heb. 9. 12. He obtained eternal red-*
for us.

Now the second thing whereunto we shall
for clearing of the words , is this , *viz.* How
said , That Christ was the first Preacher of the
nal salvation ? We do not think that the words
thus to be understood , that the Gospel , or
great salvation was never preached before

in the flesh ; but we think the meaning of the
s may be one of these three, if not all of them.

First, That all the preaching of this great salva-
under the Law , did come very far short in the
of fulness, in comparison of Christs preaching
Therefore is Christ said to be the first Preach-
this great salvation : As if he had said, I know
he preached of this great salvation : and E-
he preached of this great salvation : And the
ve Patriarchs , they preached of this great salva-
And all the Prophets who went before Christ,
are now in Heaven , they preached of this great
tion ; But all their preaching deserved not the
e of preaching in comparison of Christ ; for, *Ne-
nan spake as he spake.* Thus Christ was the first
preacher of this great salvation.

Secondly, This may be the meaning of it, that
st was the first Preacher of this great salvation, in
ect of his clear way of Preaching of it: for he was
first Preacher of it without Types and Shadows,
as first preacher of it clearly and fully , with so
n demonstration and power of the Spirit.

Thirdly, The meaning of this (that Christ was
first preacher of this great salvation) may relate
is appearing to *Adam* in Paradise , when he be-
the first & great Preacher of this Salvation, when
id speak that word unto him , *The Seed of the wo-
shall tread down the head of the Serpent.* The first
ous preaching of this great salvation was , when
st preached it to *Adam* in Paradise. And that was
first and glorious morning of this blessed Gospel.
ow we shall speak a little to the first of these six
gs which we observed from the words, *viz.*

that there are many within the visible Church,
are neglecters and flighters of this great salvati-
(do you not all take with it ?) It is clear, *Mat.*
towards the close , and chap. 22. 5. Where
thes

these persons being invited to come to the *marriage* or feast of the Gospel, It is said of them, *They were in the light of it.* Which are the same words in *Matthew 23. 13.* And *Luke 14. 18.* When they were invited to it is said, *They all with one consent began to make excuse.* And *Isa. 28. 2.* *This is the rest wherewith will I make them weary to rest, this is the refreshing, yet they will not hear.* Now is there a person here who will deny this charge, that he is a flighter of this great salvation? I confess, I am afraid that ye will not answer with it; Therefore I shall propose eight sorts of persons who are flighters of this great salvation. I charge you, as you will answer to God one day, ye search your hearts, whether ye be among the number (in the Catalogue) of the flighters of the great salvation.

I. The first sort of persons, who are flighters of the great salvation, are these persons who go about to establish their own righteousness, and will not take the righteousness of Christ (in a word) it is the first sort of persons who think they may win to heaven by the Covenant of Works, and will not take the Gospel of travelling to Heaven in the Covenant of Grace. Surely there is not a person here, who hath a cursed inclination to be as little obliged to Christ (for his salvation) as he can. We would go to Heaven without the Way, which is Christ. And (believing) there are many in this congregation, who go about to establish their own righteousness. I shall propose six sorts of persons who fall under the first rank.

1. The first sort are these who trust on their own civility, and think these will carry them to Heaven. These are the persons who go about to establish their own righteousness. Say they, I defy the Law, I will say any thing to me, I was evermore an honest man, and I trust therefore that I shall go to Heaven.

o thee, (O atheist that thou art) thou shalt
win to heaven by these means , till thou come
rist with this , *All my righteousness is like filthy*

The second sort are these, who build their con-
fidence upon their denial of their good works, but yet
never this length to make use of Jesus Christ.

The third sort are these, who build their confi-
dence upon their duties; They think they will come
to heaven by their good prayers , by their reading,
by their fasting, (like unto that Pharisee, *Luke*
11.) *I thank God I am not like other men: for I fast*
in the week, I pay tithes of all that I possess; But
unto thee , thy duties will never bring thee to
heaven, if Christ be not the end of all thy duties, nor
canst thou perform any duty without him.

The fourth sort of persons who fall under this
rank of flighters of the Great Salvation are those
who trust on their convictions. If they have once been
repentant of their sin and miserable estate, they think
there is no more to do, Christ will never reject them,
they sit down and build their hope upon these
convictions.

The fifth sort of persons are those who build
confidence upon their resolutions. Say they,
times have I resolved to be a better man then I
am therefore I think (which is the fearful delusion
of the hypocrite) that *God will accept the will for the deed:*
if it had been good for many, such a word had not
been in the Bible; or that their cursed eyes had never
seen it. But know this , that though thou hast as
many resolutions as *Peter* , or as good wishes as *Bar-
nabas*, if thou never labour to bring them to pra-
ctice God shall say to thee, *Depart from me, I know you*
any of you who build upon your resolutions, ye
build upon a sandy foundation , these being many
in appearance of goodness but like the morning dew.

6. And the sixth sort of persons who fall into this first rank of flighters of this great salvation wherein the evil is most subtile) are these who put their salvation upon their graces; these also go to establish their own righteousness: But I say to thee, Thy graces cannot be the foundation of thy hope, although they may be as evidences to strengthen thy hope. Now are there none here who consider this first rank of flighters of this great salvation? are there none here who will confess that they are gone about to establish their own righteousness? I say to thee, who wilt confess, put a rope about thy neck, and come to Christ; for he is a King: I say to thee, come to Christ with this confession, *my righteousness is like filthy rags*: And if thou come with this in sincerity, he shall say, *Bring hither the white robe and put it upon him*: If thou art brought to speak that in sincerity to Christ, shall be no more betwixt Christ and thee, But he shall cloath him with the white robe.

2. Secondly, These persons slight the great salvation, who delay their taking hold of the offers of the Gospel: For there are many (who preach this Gospel, and when we hold out the Salvation unto them) who say *I will follow thee, But I must first go home and bury my father*; (and thus they delay to take hold of this great salvation) I say to you (who ever ye be) that thus delay to take hold on this great salvation, ye are the flighters of the great salvation: there a person within these doors, who dares not acknowledge that he hath slighted this great salvation and delayed to embrace it? O tell me! whose consciences speak? Are there any but they who acknowledge they come under the second rank of flighters? I say to you, who have thus delayed, will ye embrace it? I say even unto you who are old men, past sixty years, and have slighted this great

ng) yet this day this great salvation is offered
you? What say ye to it? O what do you say to this
? Are ye saying I must now delay (and not re-
this great salvation) till my harvest be by, and
I say unto thee, that the Harvest of the Wrath
d is ripe, and he shall put in his sickle, and cut
down. I will say no more to these who thus slight
great salvation, but this, *why stand ye all the day
Market place idle, and doing nothing.* O will ye
be induced to take and imbrace this Great sal-
n, before it be hid from your eyes.

Thirdly, These persons are the flighters of this
salvation, who complement with Christ when
re invited to come and partake of it: And say
y to the Minister, (or rather to their own con-
es) *I pray you have me excused at this time, as
Luk. 14. 18.* But I would only ask at such, have
lawful excuse, why ye will not come and par-
of this great salvation? Is there any person here,
ath any lawful excuse to present? I shall never
hat off your hand, *Have me excused;* But be sure
, it shall never excuse you, but accuse you.
fore I desire that these persons, who have sligh-
is great salvation, by complementing with
that they would complement no more with
all, but now imbrace it.

The fourth sort of persons who slight this great
on, are these who give way to discouragement
belief, so that they will not come and par-
this great salvation: I say, such of you are
rs of it, and Christ will esteem you such. Oh
new the worth and vertue of this great salvati-
there would not be a temptation you could
with, that would hinder you from imbracing
out if thou could not answer these temptati-
thou would not own them. I say unto such

Undervaluers and flighters of the Great Salvation, discouraged persons, (*And these who stay long at the place of the breaking forth of Children*) that when I do not answer your objections, which hinder your coming to Christ, I intreat you disown them, if you heard them not: Say ye, Think ye this? I say, it is both lawful and expedient, for it is the practice of believing *Abraham*, He considered his own body, being dry, as an old stick, Nor the dearth of *Sarahs womb*. He did not consider these things might have been objections to keep him from coming. He might have started at these two objections. Alace, I am old, and that objection could he answer: And my wife is past child bearing, and that could he answer that objection. What then did he do with them? He slighted them both, and comforted himself with them not. Secondly, I would say this to you, that thus slight it because of discouragements: I know the worth of the Great Salvation, when I see this Gospel Redemption, that is offered unto us, although ye had an army of objections to go through, ye would go through them all, *To get a drink of water of this well of Bethlehem.*

V. The fifth sort of persons who slight the Great Salvation, are these who will not do so much care, and give pains to hear this Great Salvation preached unto them; for there are some persons who when they come to the Church, desire to sit far off, and so never take care to hear a word of the Great Salvation: And are such dreadful flighters of God, unto these mentioned, *Jer. 6. 10. To whom I will give warning, that they may hear? But their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken, But they would not hear, Jer. 7. 10. Who say, We will not be delivered to do all these abominations: yet they will stand before him, in the House which was called by his Name.*

I. Sixthly, These persons are flighters of this Great Salvation, (who when they hear it) are no more affected with it, then if we were to tell them the most senseless history of *Thomas the Rhymer*, or some other old fable; like unto these mentioned, *Jer. 6. 10. The word of the Lord is unto them a reproach, they have no delight in it.* I would tell you all as in the sight of the Author of this Great Salvation, (men or women) did you ever give your selves (or took ye ever pains) to bring up your hearts to the love of this Great Salvation? was ever the rejoycing of your hearts that Christ died and rose again? I do certainly believe it (and I am persuaded) that there are decrees past in Heaven against many of you, *That in hearing ye shall hear, but shall not understand; and in seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:* For God hath made your hearts harder than the Flint, or Adamant; so that ye shall refuse to believe when he doth exhort you. Believe me, (if I may so speak) I think there is as much probability that the stones of the Wall would hear (if we would speak to them) as soon as many of you.

II. Seventhly, These persons are flighters of the Great Salvation, who did never complain that they wanted a right to this Great Salvation. I hope some of you are now convinced that ye never came within the compass of this Great Salvation: I say yet unto you, if ye did never spend one hour in secret weeping and lamenting, because ye had not a right to the Gospel Redemption, it is but too probable you never yet had a right to it. Yea, know it, that such of you would little care to let precious Christ depart without any grief of heart; I think if this were done within this house to day, whether or not Christ go and depart, I doubt if there would be many heart dissenters, though many Tongue-dissenters: Oh, I fear there would be many hearts

here saying, O Christ, depart and go thy way, there are many *Gaderens* here, who prefer their *swine* to precious Christ, and would beseech him to depart from *their coasts*.

VIII. Eighthly, These persons fling the salvation, who never took pains to engage themselves to take hold of Christ and the Gospel, Christ is now to you this day: The great salvation is near and is now, even now offered unto you; There are there any who will take pains to lay hold on? I obtest you all who are here, by the beauty and excellency of him who is the Author of this great salvation, that ye come and partake of it; I obtest you by all the joyes of heaven that ye imbrace this great salvation, I obtest you by all the terrours in hell, that ye imbrace it, I obtest you by the promises of the *new* Covenant, that ye imbrace it, I obtest you by the curses that are written in this Book of the Covenant that ye imbrace it, I obtest you by the love of God to your immortal souls, that ye would once be saved and come and partake of this great salvation. Now have it, saith thou? Yea, I say unto you ye may have it to day, ye may be partakers of it if ye go hence: And so before I proceed any further I do in the Name and Authority of him who sent me here to day, (and is the Author of this great salvation) freely offer it unto you; Therefore turn from me of my hand, embrace this great salvation offered you to day; But I know there will be eight of humors within this house to day, in relation to this great salvation, which is now offered you.

I. I think there will be some of *Gallio's* disposition here to day, that will care for none of these things; Yea, there are many here who will not care for a fig for this rich offer of the great salvation; But I say, cursed be that person who puts on *Gallio's*

(to day) that will care for none of these things. I fear there will be many of *Pilats* humor here (to day) who will say, they find nothing against the yet will cry forth, *Take him and crucifie him.* They find no fault with Christ, and yet will be content that he be crucified. Now can ye say any thing against him, who is the Author of this great salvation? Pro- your strong arguments, are there any here who say any thing to say against Him? I am here to answer in His Name: I hope there is not one here who says any thing to say against the Author of this great salvation; And why then do ye not take him? See unto yourselves, that there be none of *Pilats* humor here to day, that will cry out, *Ye find nothing in Christ why should not be received,* and yet will be content, that he be crucified.

There will be many of the Jews humor here to day who cry forth, *Away with Christ, away with him, and give me Barabbas.* But oh! what a hellish humor is that, *Away with Spotless Christ; away with the transcendent Christ, and give us the world?* Now are there any here who will be so gross slighers of this great salvation: Will ye slight this great salvation, and embrace your idols, which shall once prove a crown of thorns unto you?

There will be some of *Felix* humor found here to day, that will say, *O Christ, go away at this time, I will hear thee at a more convenient season.* But, unto you who will not hear me to day, nor imbrace this great salvation, I shall defy all the Ministers in Scotland to assure you, that ye shall get another offer, if ye send me away to day. There is not that can, or dare, engage, that the great salvation shall be in your offer any more. Therefore I beseech let none of *Felix* temper be here to day, that will say, *They will hear Christ at a more convenient sea-*

5. There will be some of *Balaams* temper (who will desire *To die the death of the righteous* to have their *last end* like his; yet they desire live the life of the righteous. But I say unto you shall never die the death of the righteous, if not the life of the righteous.

6. There will be some of you here (to day (I hope) at least, will be of *Agrippa's* humour will say, *Thou hast almost perswaded me to be a Christian*. I say unto thee, O will thou quickly on that word *almost*, and put in that word *altogether* say, O precious Christ, *Thou hast altogether perswaded me to be a Christian*. However, if thou come no longer length, I intreat thee come this length, that I may cry out, *I am almost perswaded to embrace the Great Salvation*; and may be ere long ye will further.

7. There will be some of *Judas* temper (to day) *who will betray Christ for thirty pieces of silver*. Yea, some would sell Christ, Heaven, their idols, for less then *thirty pieces of silver*.

8. I think there will be many of *Esaus* temper here (to day) *who will sell their Birth-right for a mess of pottage*. Now will ye enquire of yourselves, am I the person that will give my birth-right for a mess of pottage? Doth my heart say, I will give my birth-right, because I am hungred, and ready to eat? *What will it profit me, give me a mess of pottage will quite my birth-right?* I know it, there are few such here to day; Therefore I intreat you, look at your selves what is your humour. Oh shall the salvation that ye have slighted so long, be slighted to day also, and shall there be none to embrace it? inquire, and stand in awe, lest the wrath of the High pursue you.

Now I shall give you these seven considerations which may provoke you not to flight (but imbrace this great salvation.

The first Consideration, That the not imbracing of this great salvation is one of the greatest acts of folly that can be, *Jer. 8. 9. They have rejected the word of the Lord: (and immediatly it is subjoined) what wisdom is in them?* And so Solomon doth say you they cannot be wise who neglect this great salvation, *Prov. 1. 7. Fools despise wisdom and instruction.*

Therefore, may I not say unto you, be who will (though ye were the greatest heads of wit in this place) ye are but stark fools as long as ye neglect this. But would ye be wise indeed, and wise to eternal life: Then I intreat you come and imbrace this great salvation.

I. The second consideration, to provoke you not to slight the great salvation, is this, that the ruine and destruction of the flighters of it, is most certain and infallible, *Jer. 11. 11. Where (speaking of slighting the Covenant, which is indeed the same great salvation) there is a Therefore put to the threatening: There-fore thus saith the Lord, I will bring evil upon them, which they shall not be able to escape.* I defy you all who are flighters of this great salvation, to find a backslider, when justice shall pursue you: For there is no escape if ye imbrace not this great salvation: *the earth will disclose your iniquity, and heaven will be your sin.*

II. Thirdly, Let this Consideration provoke you not to slight this great salvation, that Christ is exceedingly serious, and earnest that ye would imbrace

And I think that, *Isa. 28. 23. speaketh out his exceeding seriousness: where four times he beggeth his hearers, that they would give ear and hear his voice (saying) Give ear, and hear my voice, hearken, hear my speech.* What needeth all these exhortations?

But that Christ is most serious, that they should imbrace the great salvation. And O that there were a person here (to day) as serious to the

bargain as Christ is! But, be who ye will that this great salvation, (believe me) the day is come wherein ye shall cry out, alace for my slighting. Wilt thou therefore think presently with thy fellow thou flighter of this great salvation) what wilt thou say of thy slighting of it, when the devil shall be bringing thee in thorow these dark gates of hell? O flighter of the Gospel, how many alaces wilt thou cry, thou shalt be passing thorow these dark gates into everlasting prison? Wilt thou not then cry out to me, flighter of the everlasting Salvation) what am I now going? Alace, now for my slighting of the Gospel: And as thou passest thorow, thou shalt be with numbers of miserable comforters. There is not one in that prison who can comfort thee: But many dreadful alaces shalt thou then both cry and hear, if thou imbrace not this great salvation.

IV. Fourthly, Let this provoke you not to slight the great salvation, that ye will get it for a very low rate. O ye within this house to day, ye will get this salvation for one look, *Isa. 45. 22. Look unto me and I will save you, all the ends of the earth.* For a very low rate ye will get this great salvation: and do ye ever think to get Heaven at a lower rate?

V. The fifth Consideration, to provoke you not to slight this great salvation any more, is this, That is not one of you who is a flighter of it, but a flighter of it shall increase your immortal bonds. O Man or Woman, be who thou wilt, when thou art slighting this great salvation, thou art but plating a nail wherewith to bind thy soul eternally in these quenchable flames, *Isa. 28. 22. Be ye not mockers, lest your bonds be made strong.* I say therefore unto you, *Old men, mock not, lest your bonds be made strong. Old women, near unto your Graves, mock not, lest your bonds be made strong. Young men, be ye not mockers,*

lest your bonds be made strong. Young women, who in the flower of your time, mock not, lest your days be made strong. But now alace, will there (for this) be a person here to day who will be a mock-
of this great salvation.

I. The sixth consideration, to provoke you not to slight this great salvation any more, is this, Ye know but that your days may be near a close: I say, ye know not, but the day of the preaching of this great salvation may be near unto a close. What knowest thou, O man or woman, but this shall be the last Sermon that ever thou shalt hear concerning this great salvation? And yet for all all this, shall we be sent away without one consent to embrace or receive it? Will ye be perswaded to look to Christ, and so to receive him.

VII. The seventh consideration, to provoke you not to slight the great salvation, is this, that there is a five-fold Salvation comprehended under this great Salvation.

I. The first is this, come and partake of this great salvation, and thou shalt have salvation from thy idols: and hereby I do proclaim liberty (this day) unto captives. I am sent forth (this day) with the keys of your prison-house, to open your prison doors unto you, if ye will embrace this great salvation. I say unto you, O ye prisoners, come forth and show your faces; for the keyes of your prison-house are with us, we will open your prison-doors unto you, therefore, O come forth and embrace this great salvation. Will there be any (shall I think) here that will refuse to come forth, O! go forth, and flee from the land of your captivity, and from the house of your bondage.

II. Thou shalt have salvation from thy darkness, and from thy ignorance? I say unto you who understand no more of God then the stones in the wall, I
com-

command you to come forth ; and partake ye of this great salvation ; and unto you shall light arise this day ; the day spring from on high shall visit you.

III. If ye will come and partake of this great salvation, ye shall have deliverance from all your fears : thou fear that thou shalt be poor : come and partake of this great salvation ; and thou shalt be delivered from it : art thou afraid of hell ? come and partake of this great salvation ; and thou shalt be delivered from that fear. Art thou afraid at the wrath of God ? Then come (I say) and partake of this great salvation ; and thou shalt have redemption from that, and from all fears, *with him is plenteous redemption, and he will quiet thee from the fear of evil.*

IV. If thou wilt come and partake of this great salvation, thou shalt have deliverance from all thy anxieties, and from all thy cares, ye are now careful and anxious about many things ; come and partake of the great salvation, and it will make you careful but only for *one thing necessary.*

V. If ye will come and embrace the great salvation offered unto you this day, ye shall be helped to sing ye go hence to sing that song, *O death ! when will thou sting ? O grave ! where is thy victory ?* Now, O ye that come and embrace this great salvation, And ye shall be more than conquerors thorow Christ who loveth you : there therefore any here to day that would have victory over the devil, and over their own hearts ? come and embrace this great salvation, and then victory is certain.

But now to press home this great salvation unto you a little further ; there are nine sorts of persons who are invited to come and partake of this great Salvation offered this day ; And I charge you all to your names when ye are called, and delay not to come.

I. First, I invite and call here, to day, all whose

ling to come and embrace this great salvation. Now, are there any of you here to day, who are called *willing*? then I invite you to come and embrace this great salvation, *Rev. 22. 17. Whosoever will, let him come*: But oh, are there none here to day who are named *willing*? I intreat you, if there be any, do not say your name, but come when you are called and embrace this great salvation.

I. Secondly, These persons who thirst for it, are invited to come, and partake of this great salvation, *Rev. 22. 17. Let him that is athirst, come*. Now if there be any here who are named *thirsty*, let them come and partake of this great salvation, and they shall be satisfied.

III. Thirdly, Are there any money-less folk here to day? Let them come and partake of this great salvation. Are there no money-less folk here to day? I mean not that money or coin in your purses, but want ye money? That is, want ye righteousness? Then I pray you, come and partake of this great salvation. Are ye so poor, that ye have nothing but the fear of hell? Then I pray you come, If there be any here who have nothing to commend them to Christ, but necessity; I say unto all such, *O come, come, come*, and partake of this great salvation.

IV. Fourthly, These persons are invited to come (and I wish there were many such) who are *weary*; Oh! are there none here to day who are called *weary*? Are ye not weary in pursuit of your sins? If there be any such here to day, I say unto you, *O weary folk, come, come, come*, and partake of this great salvation, and of this excellent Gospel Redemption that was purchased at so dear a rate.

V. Fifthly, These who are heavy laden, are invited to come, (and I think all of you may answer to this name) are ye *heavy laden*? O then come, But are there none here who are heavy laden with sin,
with

with misery, and estrangement from God? If there be any such here, I say unto thee, old man, or young man, be who thou wilt, *O come, and partake of this great salvation.*

VI. Sixthly, Are there any here to day, who are called blind? I say, if there be any of you who say ye want eyes to see the precious excellencies of Christ, I invite you to come and partake of this great salvation.

VII. Seventhly, Are there any who are called lame here to day? I say unto such, *O come, come, come, and partake of this great salvation*: For we are sent forth to day, to call in the blind and the maimed, and the lame that they may come and embrace this great salvation: Therefore there are none here to day who may be called such: Are ye neither blind nor lame? I hope many of you will not deny that ye are such. Therefore I say unto you, *O blind, halt, and maimed, come, come, and partake of this great salvation.*

VIII. The eighth sort of persons invited, are the sick who are *sick*, therefore if there be any sick folk here to day, be who ye will, I say unto you, *O come and partake of this great salvation, For the whole need not the Physician, but the sick.*

IX. Ninthly, Are there any here to day who know not their name, or their condition, I say unto you, *O nameless folk, come and partake of this great salvation, come to Christ for the knowledge of your souls condition, come as a nameless one, and he will not reject thee though thy cause were so evil that he could not give it a name; for, Of all that come unto him he sendeth none away.*

Now where do you find your name and surname? *O do you not know it?* I hope now you may know it, therefore I intreat you answer to it, and so come and partake of this great salvation.

I am afraid there be many strong iron-bars in the
of some of you, which ye cannot win over. Ah,
fast are some souls locked in Satans snare? And
efore I shal speak a little for discovering of these
, that hinder from imbracing this great salvati-
that so ye may be the better helped to remove,

I. The first great iron bar which keepeth folk from
racing this great salvation, is the bar of ignorance;
I am afraid, that this (as a mighty bar) hindereth
y of you; Ye are ignorant of your selves, and of
condition of your soul, ye are ignorant of the Law
its severity, and ye are ignorant of the precious
pel in its condescendency. ● pray unto God, that
Christs sake, he would break that great bar of ig-
nace; for till that be done, Christ may take up
complaint, *Jer. 5. 4: Surely they are foolish, they*
know not the way of the Lord, nor the judgement of their
I say, this bar of ignorance keepeth you from
racing this great salvation.

II. The second bar which keepeth many from clo-
ing with Christ, is, the bar of *presumption*, for some
cry out, what need have I to imbrace the great
salvation? Have I it not already? But I say unto thee,
fool, thou art (by all appearance) yet in bondage.
That this evil bar of presumption were put away;
it is one of the greatest impediments which lyeth
in the way of your imbracing this great salvation that
I offer to day. Therefore I say unto you, if
it will come no further, I intreat you come this
evening, to confess that ye want this Gospel Salvation,
and that ye are indeed strangers to this Redemption
purchased by Christ.

III. The third bar that keepeth persons from im-
bracing this great salvation, is the bar of *unbelief*,
believe not what we say to you anent this great
salvation. I know that some of you are of the Stoicks
and

and Epicures humor, who cry out, *what meanest thou man? He seemeth to be the setter forth of some strange* But I say unto you, I am not the setter forth of a strange God, but it is Jesus of Nazareth whom I preach unto you. Alace, some of you thinketh this great salvation to be some morning dream, or some golden dream: but I say unto you, it is neither a dream nor a golden dream; but a real truth that we preach unto you.

IV. The fourth bar that keepeth persons from embracing of this great salvation, is the bar of *discomfiment*: This strong bar keepeth many so fast, that they cannot embrace this great salvation though it be freely offered unto them. I shall say no more to you who are such, but counsel you to do as these four men did, 1 King. 7. 4. *who sat at the gate of Samaria who said, why sit we here till we die? if we will enter into the City, then the famine is in the City and we shall die there: and if we sit still we die also.* Now therefore come, and let us fight against the host of the Syrians, if they save us alive, we will live, and if they kill us, we shall but die. Even so I say unto you, that if ye abide in the state of unbelief, your salvation shall surely be undone; therefore go forth, for ye shall not but God may work a great salvation for you if ye will quite your unbelief, and close with Christ in the offer of this great salvation (by faith) ye shall have no more to do, but eat and drink, and divide the same.

V. The fifth bar which withholdeth persons from embracing of this great Salvation, is the bar of *unwillingness*, *Ye will not come to me, that ye may have life.* And alace, that is an iron bar indeed, by which all that are in hell have barred themselves out of heaven. Alace shall ye be such wretches also. O what a dreadful sound is that, *wo unto thee, O Jerusalem, that thou not be made clean? when shall it once be? Ah, thou, turn you, why will ye die? Why will ye fligh*

salvation ? O will none of you this day im-
brace it!

I. The sixth bar that withholdeth persons from
embracing the great salvation, is the bar of *worldly*
attachments: many of you are so fixed to the world,
ye cannot come and close with this great salvati-
on. I may allude to that word spoken of *Saul*, 1 *Sam.*
22, that he *hid himself amongst the staffs*, for many
are buried, and nested themselves in the midst of the
world, that they cannot embrace this great Salvation.

II. The seventh bar which keepeth many from
embracing this great Salvation, is the bar of *hard-heart-*
edness: there hath such a stupidity & hardness of heart
been put upon many, that let Christ preach as he will
unto them (by his Word, or by other dispensations) they
are no more moved, then if his Word and dispensa-
tions were a thousand miles from them. O that strong
bar of hardness of heart, when shall the Omnipotent
Arm of God break it?

III. The eighth bar that hindreth many from im-
bracing this great salvation, is the bar of *slothfulness*.
Many of you cannot be at the pains to embrace it:
I say unto you, there is but small pains in the way
of Godliness: I say unto you, it may so easily be
obtained, that it is in your offer to day: and if ye will,
ye may put forth your hand, and take it. Consider
therefore what ye will do: O will ye despise it, I
will ye still neglect and despise it? will ye but
hear that dreadful word, *Acts* 13. 40, 41. *Behold ye*
despisers, and wander and perish. Tell me freely, would
ye have us to return this answer to him who sent us,
that ye are despisers of the great salvation? Say to it,
there none of you, who (for all this) will consent
to partake of this great salvation? O captives and pri-
soners, and ye who are in the bonds of Satan, will ye
not come and partake of this great salvation, and you shall
be made free. I have an act of release for you to
day;

day; if ye will come, and make use of it, ye shall be set at liberty. But, Oh, shall the prison doors be open, and yet none come forth? But (that I may bring you from a close) I say unto you, O poor prisoners, *go forth*, and partake of this great salvation. Oh, will ye not come forth? What holdeth you in? The foundation of your prison house is shaken to day, therefore if ye will but come forth, and cast a look to God, your very shackles shall fall off your hands, and ye shall be as those who were never bound. Now I say this with you, and to make you think upon it, I will speak these five words unto you, and I intreat you to think upon them.

I. First, I have excellent tidings to tell you (I find some of you will give ear to them) *viz.* That the great Person come here to day, and that is the most blessed Author of this great salvation, who hath brought forth everlasting righteousness with him, desiring you to make use thereof; It is his desire that ye would take this excellent Gift at his hand. These, I say, are the good tidings that I have to preach unto you; and I hope never to be declared a liar; for what I preach unto you, I say yet unto you, that Christ, the Author of this great salvation, desireth to give it freely unto you, if ye will but take it. But O will ye not take it? I think if ye did see an hundred men lying in prison, or in a dungeon, without all light, bread, or water, and a Prince coming to them, saying, I desire to see you, so go to come forth, and partake of this great liberty which I bring unto you; and every one of them should answer, *I scorn to come forth at this time*; would ye think them exceeding great fools? And yet I see that this act of great folly fall out in many of your hands to day; that when Christ hath given us the keys of the prison doors, and they are opened, ye will not come forth. But I must intreat you yet to come forth, and shew your selves; For who knoweth, but we may be

manded to shut your prison doors again, and to seal them with seven seals, with an unalterable decree from heaven, never to be recalled? Wherefore, ye prisoners *go forth*, *go forth* from your prison

Secondly, I would say this to you, that it is not without much ground that this Salvation (offered to you) is called a great salvation, I know a little Paper of two or three sheets, might contain all the salvation that ever any man obtained; but the World would not be able to contain all the Books which might be written to the commendation of this great salvation; (unto any who will embrace it) I say first, If thou find not this salvation above thy faith, then go thy way when thou art come; But I know thou wilt find it both above thy faith and hope. Secondly, If thou find it not above thy desires, when thou art come unto it; then go thy way again; but were thy desires as the sand upon the sea shore, thou shalt always find more in this salvation then ever thou couldst desire. Thirdly, If this salvation be not above what thou canst conceive, then go thy way when thou art come to it; But think of it as thou canst, it shall always be above thy thoughts of it: Fourthly, If this salvation be not above thy opinion of it, then go thy way when thou art come unto it: but I know thou wilt find it far above thy opinion of it. Therefore seeing it is so great a Salvation, as that all the world could not contain all the Books which might be written in the commendation of it, O will ye embrace it, even to day, for it is in your offer.

Thirdly, I would say this unto you, be persuaded that there is no sin that will more provoke the wrath of God to punish you, then the sin of slighting this great salvation, *Bring forth these murderers, faithless* (of the slightrers of this invitation) *and slay* before me. I intreat you enquire at your own hearts,

hearts, what will ye answer when ye are reproved, for slighting of it? Old men, will ye ask at your own hearts, what ye will answer to Christ when he shall propose that question to you, Why slighted ye the great Salvation? Old women, what will ye answer when he shall say to you, why slighted ye the great salvation? Young men, and young women, in your own hearts what ye will answer when he shall say to you, why slighted ye the great salvation? Can ye imagine any answer unto that question, which shall be dreadful shall the wrath of God be, that shall be executed upon the slighers of this great salvation?

4. Fourthly, I would say this unto you, that many of you are waiting to hear, what acceptance the offer of this great salvation doth get among you. Here is the offer of the great salvation, here is the offer of it, and here is the commendation of it; what say ye to it? is it an excellent salvation? is it not a free salvation? is it not a great salvation? is it not an eternal salvation? then do ye not welcome it? can any of you say anything to the discommendation of it: I know you say not? Yea I dare say, your own hearts are saying it as most excellent; And therefore, O will ye accept it. Alas, shall there be none here who will be found accepters of this great salvation, so freely offered to day?

5. Fifthly, I would say this to you, let all the angels praise him who is the Author of this great salvation. All the Saints round about the Throne praise him who is the Author of this great salvation, these who are expectants of heaven praise him who is the Author of this great salvation: All ye to whom this offer is made, praise him who is the Author of this great salvation. O heaven praise him, who is the Author of this great salvation. O all ye fowls of the air, praise him, who is the Author of this great salvation. O fire, hail, snow, vapors, stormy winds,

ests, praise him who is the Author of this great salvation. All the Tribes of the Earth, praise him who is the Author of this great salvation. Our soul praise him, who is the Author of this great salvation, and all that is within us ble's him, who is the Author of this great salvation? O who would not see him, who is the Author of this great salvation? Are there any here that will refuse to commend him? Think upon him, and let not this be a day of flight from him? Now where are your hearts at this time? Will tell you where many of your hearts are, they are looking upon the world: but I am sure there are not any of them thinking upon this great salvation. Now what resolution mind ye to go away with to day? Oh, have ye no resolution beyond what ye had when ye came hither to day? Are there any here who have no resolution, *To whom shall we go, but to him who is the Author of this great Salvation, who alone hath the keys of eternal life?* Even the Lord breath it upon you. Or is this your resolution, that through Christs strength (*forsake him who will*) ye will never forsake him? Or, have ye this resolution, *That ye will esteem him highly of the Great Salvation then ever ye did?* O that the Lord may keep these in the imaginations of the thoughts of your heart for ever. But as for you who have no resolutions to embrace this great Great Salvation, wherewith shall I commend it unto you? Do not your own necessities commend it? But if nothing can persuade you to come away and embrace it, then this day shall be a heap of witnesses against you: For it hath heard all the words of the Law which he hath spoken unto you, Josh. 24.

Oh, cast your eyes upon these pillars of the house, and stones in the walls: I take them as so many witnesses, that they may speak, and testify against you in the great day of the Lord, if ye neglect this great salvation to day. Therefore as ye go away, be thinking

ing

ing upon it, and whether or not ye mind to imbrace it, now while you may have it: This day I have set before you your life and death before you: I have set before you not veneration, and the great damnation; O that ye had understanding in all these things; ye being wise, might be provoked at last to imbrace this great salvation, the which we do yet again invite you to think upon. Is not heaven looking upon you at this time, to see what ye will do with this offer of Salvation which I have this day (from the Lord) presented unto you? Now, to Him, who can perswade you to imbrace this great salvation, this Gospel Redemption, this blessed mystery into which the Angels desire to pry, to him, who can bring you back from the pit: and can enlighten you with the light of the living; To him who hath the keyes of the prison, who can open and none can shut, and can shut and none can open; To Him, who hath all power in heaven and in Earth communicate to Him, who can deliver you from the power of the grave, and can set you free from all your enemies, We desire to give praise, Amen.

SERMON II.

Heb. 2. 3. *How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.*

T Here are two great and most ordinary complaints in these days; 1. There are many who complain, that their Estates and Persons are in bondage, and that they are sold for slaves to the hands of strangers: But, O that we could also turn over the complaint to this, that our souls are in bondage, and that we are yet in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity, that so

be provoked to long for the great salvation that
 your offer. 2. There are many complaining
 (not without much cause) that there is now such
 a generation of Errours : But , O wilt thou com-
 also of this , that within thy heart there is a
 generation of lusts ; is there not an act of toleration
 included within thy breast , that the devil and all
 company may reign in thee at pleasure : Oh have
 not need of the great salvation ? Shall I tell you,
 Christ is courting you to embrace it, and that he
 hath on all his most glorious robes, and manifest-
 himself unto you, as a suitor making offer of him-
 self, and of his great salvation. O tell me, have ye
 him? or do ye think to see him this day? What
 hath he on? There are five glorious Robes
 wherewith he cloaths himself, when he condescend-
 to manifest himself to his people. First, He com-
 to his own with the *garments of salvation*, accord-
 to that word, Zech. 9. vers. 9. *Rejoyce, O daughter
 of Jerusalem, shout O daughter of Jerusalem ; for be-
 hold, thy King cometh unto thee, he is just and having
 salvation; ay, your King is come here to day , and
 ye shall not fall in love with him when he is cloath-
 ed with the Garments of Salvation : Can ye ever
 have a more conquering sight of Christ , then when
 he is cloathed with such an excellent Robe, and offer-
 you salvation. Secondly , he appeareth to his
 sometimes in a garment dyed in blood , according
 to that word , Isai. 6. verse 1, 23. *Who is this that
 cometh up from Edom , with dyed garments in blood
 who that treadeth the wine fat ?* And now I say to
 ye that will not look to Christ when he appears
 in the garments of salvation, have ye a heart to refuse
 him, that hath fought such a combat for you , who
 trode the wine press alone , and hath stained all
 his garments with the blood of his enemies ; or is
 there any here who dare refuse this Salvation, when
 they*

they see how he treadeth his enemies in anger, trampleth them in his fury, and thus sprinkles bloud upon his garments. O tremble at this, seek quarters from him in time, or he shall dye thy garments with the bloud of thy immortal soul. Thirdly, Christ appeareth unto his own, being clothed with these humble Robes of condescendency: he came in the *similitude of sinful flesh*. O what was that, to behold the Prince of Heaven clothed with our *nature*? What a fight was that to him, that was *cloathed with light*, as with a garment, to be cloathed with *our infirmities*? yet he condescended to cloath himself thus, that we might have access to Him, and be partakers of His gifts: O, can we resist Him, when love hath thus pressed him to put on this begger weed, that he might say to worms, *ye are my brethren, and my sisters*. Fourthly, Christ sometimes manifesteth Himself, being cloathed with the ornaments of beauty, and ravishing Majesty, for the sight that the Spouse got of Christ, *Cant. 2. 8* *as a pomegranate tree among the trees of the wood*, so is my beloved amongst the sons; And *Song 5*. When she saw him *white and ruddie*, and the standard bearer of the Lord's army, and such was that joyful sight of him, his garments were as the Light, and white as snow, which he had at the Transfiguration, and these glorified ones did come (as it were) Angels from that higher house to make him a visitant. Fifthly, Christ he sometimes appeareth to his enemies in Robes of dreadful Majesty, and terrible height and loftiness, when the soul upon the first sight of him remains dead, and there remains no more life in them; such was the sight Daniel got, in his 10. chapter, and such was the sight that John got of Christ, *Rev. 1. ver. 17*. And I would ask at all that are here, what a fight have ye gotten of Christ to day, in seeing Him in any of all these robes have ye seen Him in: It is

we not now to look for the extraordinary fights
in ; But yet if ever thou hast seen him in any of
roving Robs, sure he hath appeared matchless, and
shall ye then refuse him?

at now to come to the words, I was speaking unto
of; The first thing in the words, to wit, That there
many who live under the offer of this great salva-
that do flight it, and do not imbrace it; And now
I only add a few things, further unto you. 1. Let
propose a few Considerations to perswade you to
ace this great salvation; God forbid we go away
e we imbrace this Gospel salvation : And there-
I charge you in his Name, go not away before ye
ace it. And to press it home upon you, there are
eight or nine properties of this great salvation,
is offered unto you this day.

And first, it is a *free salvation*, ye have no more a do,
to put forth your hand and take it : O come and
it : Christ hath foughten for this salvation, and
is no more required of you , but to come and
the fruits of his victory ; *who ever will, let him*
there is nothing that should move you to stay a-
O captives, bond slaves to Satan, O prisoners of
will ye come and partake of the great salvation,
holds you from coming away and partaking of
is freely offered unto you; ay, believe it, Christ
res no more of you, but that ye should come and
out of his hand ; If ye consent to obey , the
is ended ; Ye shall eat the good of the land,

And, This great salvation is a compleat salva-
that is offered unto you to day , this is clear,
1. *vers. 71.* That we might be saved from our ene-
and from the hand of all that hate us, there is not
any that is in thy way , but if thou wilt come
partake of the great salvation, thou may have vi-

Story over it, so compleat a salvation it is, th
your offer this day ; O shall we pass away,
imbrace it: O shall your cursed hearts underv
compleat Salvation that is come to your door?
it, *Salvation is near unto you, if ye will take it.*

Thirdly, it is a *wonderful salvation*, it is su
vation as the Angels desireth to pry into it, a
such a salvation , that all the Prophets desire
into it ; It is almost six thousand years since
Angels in heaven fell into a Sea of wonder
great salvation ; It is almost six thousand ye
Abel fell into a Sea of wonder at this great sa
And what think ye is his exercise this day? He
wondering at this great salvation; Would ye
the Angels in heaven, would they not all say
brace the great salvation ; Would ye ask a
Saints that are above , would they not advise
imbrace the great salvation ; Would ye ask a
would he not say , *O imbrace this great Sa*
Would ye ask at *Abel*, would he not say , *O*
this great salvation ; And would not all th
archs say unto you, *O imbrace the great Salvat*
do not all that have tasted of the sweetness of
out unto you , *Come and imbrace the great*
tion.

The fourth property of this salvation is, th
bought at an exceeding dear rate, it is a dearm
Would ye know the difference between Chr
ing to this salvation, and your coming to it,
Christ was forced to travel through all the
the Justice of God; He was forced to drink
of the wrath of God , before he could com
chase this great salvation ; and now what is
of you to obtain this, we may say no more b
your hands and take it; will ye look to the
was laid down for this Salvation; there is not

the body of Christ, but it saith, *This is a dear Salvation*; There is not a reproach Christ met with, but with, *O is not this a dear Salvation*: There is not a suffering Christ met with, but it saith, *O is not this a dear Salvation*: There is not a necessity that he is put to death, but it saith, *Is not this a great and dear Salvation*? O! will ye not come and take this great salvation, this great salvation, What must I give for it say ye? I say, ye must give nothing for it, come & take it *without money, without price*; it was dear to Christ, but it shall be cheap unto you. O! is it not cheap to you? I

are you, if you will come to the market to buy the great salvation, there is none of you that needeth to pay for the price of it. O come and take it, and have it, and there shall be no more priggings.

Fifthly, It is an everlasting salvation, that ye shall enjoy the fruits of throughout eternity, as is clear, *Heb.*

3. He became the Author of eternal redemption unto

It is a salvation that the devil can never be able to take out of your hand, if ye take it, ye shall never be robbed of it again. O come and partake of this great salvation, whereby the gates of hell shall never prevail against you.

Sixthly, It is a noble and honourable salvation, it is not to be taken out of one slavery to another, but it is to be taken out of prison, that we may reign, *Luk. 1.*

71. compared with ver. 74. it is, That we being saved, may serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life. I say, Come, come, and take of this great salvation, that your glory may be increased, and that ye may be exalted above the Kings of the Earth.

Seventhly, It is a most advantageous salvation: What are the advantages of any salvation that are to be found in this? is there no peace to be found

through this salvation? Is there not liberty to be through this salvation? Is there not eternal enjoyment of God to be found through this salvation? *salvations are in this one salvation.*

Lastly, It is a royal salvation, for it comes from, and through the Son of God: Christ is the Author of it, and we conceive, Christ may be said the Author of this salvation, in these respects, is the meritorious cause that did procure it, the price of his blood that was laid down for purchase this great salvation. 2. He is the fount from whence it floweth, according to that which we have cited, *Heb. 5. 9. He became the author of eternal salvation.* 3. He is the person that removeth our spirits for partaking of it, and it is he that removeth mountains out of the way, that we may have access unto the great salvation. 4. It is he that persuadeth our hearts to embrace and take hold of it. He standeth without and cryeth in to the heart to embrace this great salvation; And he standeth within making the heart cry out *Content*, I will embrace this great salvation; He is indeed the person that commendeth it, and doth point forth this great salvation unto us. He is the noble Minister of it, it becometh to be preached by him.

Now, Is there any of you that hath fallen away from this great salvation; that ye may try yourselves? I shall give you some evidences of the persons that are far from this great salvation. Is thy estimation of the great salvation increased be what it was in the morning when thou camest hither; Is thy estimation of the great Gospel Salvation a foot higher then it was in the morning? I say unto thee, thou art not in the great salvation, Come away. 2. Is thy desire of the great salvation increased be what it was in the morning? Hath thou stronger desires after the

on, then before thou came hither, that is an evi-
 ce thou art not far from it. 3. *Is thy thoughts of thy*
ssity of the great salvation greater then they were?
 nketh thou that thou hast more need of the great
 ation then ever thou thoughtest before? And is
 opinion and thoughts of saving thy self less, then
 were before thou camest hither? Art thou forced
 ry out, *none but Christ* can save me? I say thou art
 far from the great salvation; Wilt thou come away.
 hat ye would once seal this conclusion with much
 t perswasion, *I am undone without Christ, I am un-*
without Christ, who is the Author of this great
 ation. Are there any of you that are sensible that
 re in the fetters of sin, and in the bonds of ini-
 y? Are ye brought to the conviction of this, that
 re yet in the gall of bitterness? I say, if thou be
 ight to this length, to be sensible of thy bonds,
 art crying out, *O Redeemer, hasten and come away;*
 , If thou be sensible of thy bonds and imprison-
 t, and crying out, *O thou that was anointed from*
ity, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the open-
of the prison to them that are bound, O hasten, and
come away and redeem me, even poor me, sinking,
ng, perishing, self-destroying me, thou art not
 om the great salvation. 4. Art thou a person who
 nneth to weep, because thou hast been so long a
 ger to Christ, and the great salvation; Old men,
 are here, how long have ye been strangers to the
 t salvation and to the Author of it? Now will
 ed one tear for your estrangements, and cry out,
 is me that Christ and I have been so long a sun-
 I say, if thou hast come that length, thou art
 ar from the great salvation, *Come away; O pi-*
 our selves, make haste, make haste, and *come a-*

at now in the third place, let me give you some

evidences by which ye may know more clearly ther or no, ye have imbraced *this Great Salvation* ye may know your selves, and that ye walk not to your grave with a lie in your right hand. The evidence of a person that hath imbraced the great salvation, is, that he will have a high esteem of his Saviour and Author of the great salvation; Have a matchless esteem of matchless Christ, the Saviour of the world? that is a speaking evidence unto thee, art thou a partaker of the great salvation; Art thou at this length, that thou cryeth out, *none but Christ, none but Christ*, It is a speaking evidence, that thou art come to be a partaker of the great salvation, if thou can cry out that word, *Exod. 15. 1. The Lord is my strength and my song, he alone is become my salvation* if Christ hath become thy salvation, then it is become thy strength and thy song. I would ask this at you, have ye ever brought this length, that you durst venture to praise Christ your alone, but was to call in all the creatures, and say, *O magnify the Lord with me*? O that is an evidence that ye have received this salvation.

Secondly, These who have imbraced the great salvation, will study to maintain and keep their good: they will study to hold fast so precious a thing: this is prest, *Gal. 5. 1. Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free*: yea, they will strive to walk suitable to this noble mercy, at least, they will strive and endeavour to do it, as is also prest'd, in the same vers. I say if thou hast been made a partaker of the Gospel Salvation, thou wilt strive to keep thee from the power of these things that once triumphed over thee.

Thirdly, A person that is a partaker of the great salvation, will have a high esteem of this mercy of salvation; so *Paul*, when he speaketh of it here,

but put some note of excellency to it, calling it the *great Salvation*; Therefore I say, if thou hast imbraced *great salvation*, thou wilt have so high esteem of that not to be so subjected to it as thou should, or be in subjection to the power of thy lust in any sure, will be his burden and affliction. The man be sorry when he is brought forth from the house of his bondage, unto the red sea; he will be sorry, that when he should have songs of triumph over his idols in his mouth, that they should sing songs of triumph over him.

Fourthly, A person that hath imbraced the *great salvation*, he will be longing sometimes for the day when this salvation shall be compleat, when he shall sing that song, with that *numerous multitude which cannot be numbred*, Rev. 7. 9. O what a day shall it be, when thou shalt begin to sing that song: After this (th he) *I beheld and lo, a great multitude of all people, of all nations and languages, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands, and they cried: And how cried they? They cried with a loud voice. They would not mutter the song, nor sing silently, but cried with a loud voice: And what did they cry? They cried with a loud voice, Salvation unto our God, who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb. I would only ask at you that are partakers of the great salvation, what songs shall be put into thy mouth, when the waters of Jordan shall divide themselves, That the ransomed of the Lord must pass thorow? When thou shalt sing that song, Ps. 115. 1. Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thee belongs the glory of our salvation: O what a day shall that be, when that excellent song shall be put in thy mouth? yea, what a day shall it be, when thou shalt be clothed with these excellent garments that are made*

made mention of, *Isai. 6. vers. 10.* for he hath clothed thee with the garments of *salvation*, and he covered thee with the *rob of righteousness* : robes are these ? Did ye ever see such excellent robes as these must be ? I think we will misken our selves, do ye not think we will misken our selves, we shall put on these excellent robes ? Now fore is the bargain closed : Or will ye go away, ye take this great salvation ? Dare ye go out of doors, and neglect the great salvation ? I will say this at you, Think ye it will not be most strange if Christ should tell this in heaven of you to night, that was preached to a pack of stones, that none of them would love me : Will ye not be feared that your report shall be carried back to heaven of you ? For what report can Christ carry back but this ? Will ye let the cord of this great salvation let down unto you, and there none of you that will take a grip of it ? O flighter after it ! Will ye make this a rejoicing in heaven, that is a fasting day unto you, and to make it so, is to imbrace the great salvation, what say ye to it old men, let me speak to you, ask your thoughts of the great salvation, grace should be a Crown of Glory, if they be found in the way of righteousness, old men speak your mind, young men may not have your bad example ; say ye of this salvation ? Is it not a most glorious salvation, is it not a most excellent salvation in your offer ; I intreat you speak your mind, Christ ye are content to take the great salvation otherwise, who ever he be that will not part with this Gospel salvation, I, in the Name and Authority of Christ our Master, denounce eternal and irrevokable war against him ; put on your harness, shall not boast when you put it off again, the wrath and fury of God shal come upon thee to the uttermost.

ye imbrace not this great salvation. Other wars but for a time ; the greatest captains that ever earth did carry, are now *laid down in the sides of* pit, *and their swords broken under their heads*, Armes of ten hundred thousand , a hundred years time ye laid them all in their graves, and ended all their contests, but there is no discharge of this war that shall be concluded betwixt Christ and you, it shall become eternal and most terrible War, which shall be but beginning when time is ended ; Now Peace or War, which of them will ye choise? Dare ye send a charge to Christ, and say ye will defy him? I am afraid there shall be two things that many of us shall report to day, first, I am afraid there will be many that will give *Pharaohs* report to the offer of the great salvation, and say, *who is the Lord that I should obey him?* I tell you who he is , *He is glorious in holiness, fearful in* *deeds doing wonders.* O imbrace him before he go hence, and give not *Pharaohs* report, lest ye be drowned in the sea of His wrath , whence there shall be no recovery.

Secondly, I fear there will be many here to day, that will give *Demas* report to this precious offer ; I will leave and forsake Christ, & imbrace this present world; a bad exchange; cursed be he that shall make it, will ye give of *Demas* humor? I fear there hath been many of that humor of a long time ; but I intreat you once before ye die, before you die. I confess that proverb, old fools, are twice fools; I think old men that will not imbrace this great salvation, I think ye are triple fools; What will it ye for, is there any thing can afford you any satisfaction but this great salvation? Now are ye convinced old men, that Christ is waiting for your answer : I intreat you before ye go hence, speak your minds, what ye think of the great salvation; is it not a lovely salvation, is it not lovely now? What say ye

to it? I am to go away, and the offer is to be taken at this time, and it is hard to say, if ever ye shall have an offer again. I would only say this to you, assured of it, though I should never be a partaker of that great salvation, yet I shall be a witness against those that are not partakers of it: I tell and declare unto you, I shall be a witness against you if ye embrace not that great salvation. Now, old men, are ye perswaded to embrace it? Let me obtest you *by the beauty of* Christ, come and partake of the great salvation, ye that are travelling upon the borders of eternity. Now I will give no more, give this, will ye go home and think upon it. I shall not be uncharitable, nor will I to judge your thoughts; I fear there shall be many declared and found guilty among us, that we have offered up unto heaven we will not embrace the great salvation, but have trod the blood of the *Son of God* under their feet. Now I intreat you, every one of you, ask yourselves if ye be the persons that will *presume upon* God's hearts to do so. Now I shall leave it with you, I will not be a witness against you: I shall leave it with you. O come away, Old men, Young men, Old women and Maids, come and embrace this precious Gospel of Salvation. Ye may say, Ye bid us come, but we will not come. I desire no more of you but to come to Christ, this, Lord I am content to come, but I cannot come. Come once to that: for if once ye be content to receive it, it will not be long before ye be able to love it. Now shall Christ depart, and will none of you say ye are content to take him? Will ye charge your consciences with this: Am I content to take Christ and the great salvation? O blest, blest, blest be he that is the Author of this great salvation: and be he that gets any of the ends of the cord of the great salvation, that we sink not under the wrath of the Lord. Come and embrace this great

and again I say, come and imbrace it; for what can ye have if ye want it? and what can ye want if ye have it? I shall say no more, but close with that word, 62. 2. Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed to the ends of the world, to those that are far off; what hath he proclaimed? Say ye to the daughter of Sion, Behold thy salvation cometh, behold it cometh. I say to you that are at the ends of the world, salvation is brought near unto you: stout hearted and far from righteousness, the great salvation is brought near unto you, and will you send it away? O consider what ye are doing: And to Him that can perswade you to imbrace this great salvation, we desire to give praise.



A

SERMON Concerning DEATH.

Psa. 89. 48. what man (is he that) liveth and shall not see death, &c.

IT is very hard to determine, where all that are here shall be within thirty years; for even ere that time come, many (if not all) of us who are here shall have taken up our eternal lodging. And whether we shall take it up in the eternity of joy, or the eternity of pain, is also hard to determine: only this one thing I am sure of, that all of us shall shortly be gone; And ere long the shadows of death shall be sitting upon our eye lids, and our eye-strings shall begin to break. Therefore I would the more seriously inquire at you, what would you think if death were approaching this night unto you? Think ye that Jesus Christ is gone up to prepare a place for you? even for you? Surely I think we are all near to eternity, and there are some hearing me to day, whom I desire the whole world to assure, that ever they shall hear a
nothe

another Sermon: Therefore I intreat you all to take heed to this preaching as if it were the last preaching that ever ye should hear; and O that we could speak as if it were the last Sermon that ever we would preach unto you. Believe me, death is another thing than we take it to be; *Oh, what will many of us do in the time of our visitation, when desolation shall come from the Lord, where will we flee for rest: and where will we leave our glory?* Old rich men, where will ye flee when death assaults you? Old poor men, where will ye flee when death assaults you? Old women, where will ye flee when death assaults you? Young women, where will ye flee when death assaults you? It was an ancient observation of David, Psal. 39. 5. that God had made our days as an hand breadth; which either may relate to the four-fold estate of man, viz. his infancy, his childhood, his man-hood, and his old age. Or it may relate to the four-fold time of his life, viz. his morning, forenoone, his afternoon, and his evening, yet our lifetime is but a day. And O think ye not that our day is near unto a close?

Now before that I begin to speak any thing of the words, I shall speak a few things to these two questions; which I conceive, may not altogether be unprofitable.

Quest. 1. Whether is it lawful for any to desire to die, and to return unto their long and dear home? Whether it be lawful for one to cry out, *time, time flee away (and all my shadows let them flee gone)* that so long eternity may come?

Ans. I say, it is lawful in some cases for a man to desire to die: for it was Paul's desire, Phil. 1. 23. *I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better.* 2 Cor. 5. 2. *We groan earnestly desiring to be clothed with our house which is from Heaven.* I long to

the twentieth one year of my age come , when minority shall be overpast , that I may be enter-
 heir to that matchless inheritance. But to clear in
 these cases it is lawful to desire to die.

I say, it is lawful to desire to die, when it flow-
 from a desire of uninterrupted fellowship and
 communion with Christ, and conjunction with him :
 it is clear, 2 Cor. 5. 6. *Knowing that while we are
 in the body, we are absent from the Lord. There-
 fore, 8. We are willing rather to be absent from the
 Lord, and to be present with the Lord.* Also it is clear,
 1. 23. *I am in a strait between two, having a de-
 sire to depart, and to be with Christ which is far better.*
 as his great end to have near and unmixed com-
 munion with Christ. What aileth you Paul (might
 he have said) may ye not be content to stay a while
 here? Nay saith Paul , *I desire to be gone , and to be
 with Christ.* Wast thou never with him here, Paul?
 I have been with him, saith he ; but what is all my
 joy with him here, in comparison of my being with
 him above , *while I am present in the body, I am but ab-
 sent from the Lord;* Therefore I will never be at rest,
 until I get what I will, until I get Christ, until I get
 the naked and immediate embracements of that
 the plant of renown, the flower of the stock of Jesse,
 who is the light of the higher house, the eternal admi-
 ration of Angels.

It is lawful to desire to die when it floweth from
 the excellencies of Heaven, and from a desire to partake
 of those excellent things that are there , this is
 clear, 2 Cor. 5. 4. *We groan, being burthened; or as the
 apostle saith, We groan as they who are pressed under a heavy
 burden, that we may be cloathed upon, &c.* What aileth
 you to groan so Paul ? O saith he, I groan that
 mortality may be swallowed up of life.

It is lawful to desire to die , when it floweth
 from

from a desire to be freed from the body of death, from these tentations that assault us ; and from oppressions whereunto we are subject by it. Do *Paul* desired to die on this account , when he said out, *Rom. 7. 24. O wretched man that I am, shall deliver me from the body of this death!* He saith greatly for the day, wherein he should be made like the wings of a Dove, covered with silver, whereas others are of yellow gold. O saith *Paul*, I am as on earth till I be above, where I shall be clothed with these excellent and cleanly robes, *The righteous of Christ*. Oh, saith *Paul*, I think every day a year, till I be possessed of that Kingdom where Satan cannot tempt, and the creature cannot yield , and where I shall be free from all my fears of sinning. Now, for these respects, who would not desire to die? I guard all these , I would give you these for reasons.

1. *Caut.* Your desires to die should not be empty, but ye should desire to die with submission to the will of God, so that although he would give you fifteen years more to your life, ye should be content to live it out.

2. *Caut.* When your desires are hasty, and you suspect them; for some when they meet with a hard cross (without all deliberation) will say, *O to be gone, O that I were dead.* But your desire to die should be deliberate, but not hastily on purpose.

3. *Caut.* It is not lawful to desire to die, out of personal affliction. Many, when they meet with bitter afflictions, will cry out, *O to be gone, O long for death, even upon that account ,* as *Job* desires , *Job 21. 22. and chap. 6. ver. 8. that I might have my request, even that it would please God to destroy me.* This desire was very unlawful.

4. *Caut.* It is not lawful to desire to die ,

predominant idol is taken away from thee ; yet
 was *Jonahs* desire, chap. 4. 23. *Jonah* thought his
 life and reputation (which was his idol) was gone,
 could never be regained; therefore he wished to

But I would say this to you , that some will
 have ten desires for death , when they have not one
 for heaven. And what moveth Christians to be
 desirous to die ? It is not so much because of their
 pain, as because of their anxiety ; it is not so much
 because of their confidence, as because of their impa-
 tience. But I say unto you, when your desires of death
 are not accompanied with desires of heaven, suspect

m. 2. I would say this, that there are some who
 have ten desires for death , when they will not
 have one for the death of the body of death ; But it
 is good for thee (who are such) to be desiring the
 death of the body of death, then should thou be in a
 reasonable frame to desire to die.

3. Some will have hearty desires to die , and yet
 when death cometh, they will be as unwilling to die
 as any. It hath been observed, that some who have
 much desired to die, when death came, have cryed
 O spare a little , that I may recover strength , &c.
 There is a great difference between a desire to die,
 and death it self. It is an easie thing to desire to die, but
 it is a very great business to meet with death, and to
 look it in the face when it cometh. We think death
 when it come near to us) to be but childrens play, but
 when we meet with it , it maketh us change our
 thoughts; for it is a great business to die.

Quest. 2. Is it lawful for a Christian to desire to live,
 when he is summoned to die ?

Ans. In some cases it is lawful for a Christian to
 desire to live , even when he is summoned to die ;
 which is clear from the practice of *David*, Psal. 39.
 where he prayeth, That the Lord would spare him a
 little

little. It is also clear from the practice of good *Hezekiah*, *Is. 38. 3.* when he was commanded to set in order, for he should die, and not live, he cryed Remember now, O Lord, how I have walked before truth, and with a perfect heart; and have done that is good in thy sight, and *Hezekiah* wept sore; One word in the Original, he wept with great weeping to guard this, take these two Cautions.

Cautiō 1. Thy desires to live (when thou art moned to die) should not be peremptory, but submission to the will of God, that if it be his pleasure to remove thee presently out of time, thou be content to die.

Cautiō 2. Thy desires to live should have good principles, and also a very gracious end, as is clear from *David*, *Pf. 39. 13.* where he saith, a little, that I may recover my strength, before I hence, and be no more: his desire to live was might have victory over his idols, as if he had said my desire to live is, that I may have strength to with, and overcome my Idols; and without controversy, *Hezekiah's* desire was a most precious well grounded desire: However, I would say to thee, that thou shouldest examine thy desire to live, as much (if not more) as thy desires to die; we are ready to shun death if we could, but he is the universal King, unto whom all of us must be subject long.

Now in the words which are read unto you, are these six things, which may be clearly observed from them.

I. First, That it is a most clear and infallible truth that all persons shall once see death, as is clear in the words, *who is he that liveth, and shall not see death*

II. Secondly, That this truth (that we shall see death) is not much believed or thought upon

y, therefore it is that the Psalmist doubleth the question, *who is he that liveth, and shall not see death?* he deliver his soul (that is his life) from the hand of death (that is) from the power of the grave.

I. Thirdly, That sometimes a Christian may win the solid Faith of this truth, that once he must die, the Psalmist waxes unto, as it is also clear in that verse, *(who) who is he that liveth, and shall not see death?*

II. Fourthly, That the certainty of this, that once we shall die, should be still kepted in our mind, there is that note of attention, *Selah*, is put to it; as if he said, take heed, that there is none living that shall die.

III. Fifthly, That howbeit some persons put the evil far away, as if they were not to see death, yet is the day coming when they shall see death, and death take them by the hand.

IV. Sixthly, we shall take notice of this from the next, that the Christian who is much in minding the brevity of his life, will believe the certainty of his death: the Psalmist was speaking of the shortness of life in the preceeding verse, and in this verse, he speaketh of the certainty of death.

Now as for the first of these things observed, *viz.* that it is certain and most sure, that we must all once die.

I hope there are none of you here who will deny, although I confess some few of you believe, that I said the woman of Tekoah, 2 Sam. 14. *we must all die, and be like water spilt upon the ground that cannot be gathered up again.* God doth not accept the person of any. And Job 30. 32. *I know thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living.* It is very clear, Eccles. 8. 8. *There is no man hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit, neither hath he any power in the day of death, and there is no charge in that war, neither shall wickedness deliver*

deliver those that are given to it. It is also clear
 9. 17. *It is appointed unto all men once to die.*
 most clear that we must die. I remember of Philip,
 King of Macedonia, who had one substance
 this very end to cry at his chamber-door every
 ning, *Memento mori, memento mori, memento mori*
 member thou art to die. And it is reported
 been the practice of the Nobles of Greece, and
 day wherein their Emperor was crowned, they
 presented a *marble-stone* unto him, and he was
 red after what fashion he would have his Tomb
 made? Which practice speaks forth this unto
 although these were most destitute of the light
 Scriptures, they were very mindful of death. To
 me, death may surprise us before we be aware
 it is most certain that we must die; but there is
 more uncertain then the way how, and the time
 we shall die.

Death will surprise some, as it did *Abel*, in
 an field, *Gen. 4. 8.* Death will surprise some as
Eglon, in his parlour, *Judges 3. 21.* And death
 surprise some, as it did *Saul* and *Jonathan*,
 flight, *1 Sam. 31.*

Now in speaking to this point, I shall first
 little to these advantages which attend those that
 within continual fight of death. Secondly, I shall
 you some considerations to press you to prepare
 death. Thirdly, I shall give you some directions
 help you to prepare for death: And then we shall
 proceed unto the second point of doctrine which
 served from the Text, & shall speak a few things
 it unto you, and so come unto a close for this

First then, we conceive there are these se-
 vantages which attend those who live within a
 tinual fight of this truth, that they must die.

I. First, The Faith of approaching death will

I exceeding diligent in duty : this was our blef-
 sords Divinity, *Joh. 9. 4. I must work the work of*
that sent me, while it is day: The night cometh, when
man can work; That is, death is approaching, there-
 fore I must work. It is clear also, 2 *Pet. 1. 12. com-*
mand with vers. 14. In the 12. vers. Peter is exceed-
diligent in his duty, and the ground of his dili-
 gence is in the 14. vers. *Knowing that shortly I must put*
down this my tabernacle, &c. Yet it is even the Epicures
 sentiment, *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall*
die. And should not the Christian much more cry out,
Watch and pray, for to morrow I may die? I say,
 the Epicures did make use of this notion, to make
 them vigorous in the pursuit of their pleasures : O
 much more should a Christian improve it, for
 making him vigorous in the pursuit of his duty?
 Therefore I say unto you all, O be diligent, for your
 death is drawing near. O Christians, and expectants
 of heaven, are ye not afraid lest ye be nighted before
 ye have walked the half of your journey? For if ye be
 cut off on your journey to heaven, before ye come
 to the end of your race, there is no retiring place
 wherunto ye may turn aside to lodge: therefore, O
work, work, while it is day, for behold death is
 approaching, & then shal we all be called to an account.
 The Faith of approaching death, will make a
 Christian exceeding active in duty: he will not only
 diligent, but also exceeding serious and zealous in
 the exercise of his duty: This is clear from that no-
 ble exhortation, *Eccl. 9. 10. Whatsoever thy hand find-*
eth to do, do it with thy might: and the reason is, For
 there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom
 in the grave, whether thou goest. Wherefore, O be active
 while ye are alive, for ye shall never work any more
 when ye are dead; and if ye live but one work undone,
 there is no doing of it after death, There is no work
 (thSolomon) in the grave; therefore, O be active. III.

III. The faith of this truth, that we must
 will help a Christian to be exceeding more
 the things of a present world. Oh, cover
 and women, would ye shake hands with co
 but once every morning, I should defy you to
 the world so much as ye do. *Paul* was much
 meditation of his change, which made him,
 18. to overlook these things that are tem
 while we look not (saith he) to the things
 sen, which are temporal, but to the things
 not seen, which are eternal, therefore, Chap. 5. I
 ing that if our earthly house of this tabernacle
 solved, we have a building of God, an house
 with hands, eternal in the heavens: Ther
 this we groan, earnestly desiring to be cloth
 with our house which is from heaven. What ail
Paul (might one have said) may ye not take
 of the world? no, saith he; For I know that
 earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved,
 house with God, not made with hands, but eterna
 heavens. That is, I know that ere long, the
 my tabernacle will be loosed, and it will fall
 bout my ears, therefore I must look for anothe
 ling house: And, 1 Cor. 7. 24. The fashions of thi
 passe away, Therefore, saith he, ver. 32. I wou
 you without carefulnesse, caring how to please th
 And, Phil. 4. 5. Let your moderation be know
 men, the Lord is at hand. As if he had said, I
 approaching and at hand, therefore I intreat
 sober: But I think many of us will be found li
 hid among the stuff, that is, we will be lying a
 the midst of the pleasures of this passing world
 I say unto thee who art such an one, that dea
 break the strings of thy harp, thy musick will
 ly cease. O but death will make thee have
 esteem of the world. O blessed is the person wh

thoughts of the world all along his way, which all have of it at death! have not the most cursed of men been forced to cry forth, *Oh, I would give thousand worlds for Christ?* have not some persons (who have had the Moon upon their head, and that made their belly their god) been forced to cry at death; *O cursed person that I am, that ever made the world my god?* Alas that I contented my self with the world. Therefore I say unto thee who art such an idolatrous man, stay thy pursuit after the world, for death is approaching that will cause all thy worldly comforts to cease.

When a Christian believeth this Truth, that he must die, it will be an exceeding great restraint to keep him from sinning, as is clear, *Job 31. 13.* compared with *Job 4.* where *Job* reckoning over many good deeds by himself, saith, *what then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth what shall I answer him?* As *Job* had said, *Sirs, mistake me not, I am not boasting of my self, for I could not have done otherwise, what should I do when God riseth up? how could I answer to God if I had done otherwise?* I think it will be a notable practice for each of you, to say, *O tempter; what will I answer to God, when he riseth up, to prove me, if I should yield unto thee?* Likewise, *Ecc. 11.* where *Solomon*, dissuading young men to pursue after vanity, bringeth this as a reason, *Know thou, that for these things, God will bring thee to judgement;* Therefore I say unto thee, who art often tempted to sin, let God and reckoning with God be still in thy sight, & say thee then to imbrace half so many temptations as now thou doest. I intreat you to answer all your temptations with that word, *what shall I do when he riseth up? And what shall I answer when he visiteth me?* When a Christian liveth within the sight of this Truth, that he shall once see death, it will make him

exceeding patient under every cross when meeteth : Such a Christian will hardly meet a cross, but he will quiet himself with this, *Do not put me beyond this cross : this is but a cloud that will quickly pass away.* And for this cause do so composedly put up that desire, *Psal. 39. 4. Let me know my end, and the measure of my days* : sure that the knowledge of his end would put him in a sober and patient frame.

VI. The sixth advantage is this, The fast approaching death, will teach the person that is to study saving wisdom ; This is clear, *Psal. 90. 12. Where David putteth up this request, So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.* As if he had said, I will never think myself till I know that blessed piece of Arithmetick, *number my days.* I would desire every one of you to think with your self every morning when you awake, now I am a day nearer unto eternity then I was before : and at the end of every hour, now I am an hour nearer unto eternity then I was before ; I say often, yea always thus, I was never so near unto eternity as I am now ; For, oh ! are we not all nearer unto eternity to day, then we were yesterday ?

VII. The seventh advantage, attending the approaching Death, is this, That it will make every Christian very careful in preparing for Death. It is impossible for one to believe really that death is approaching, & not to prepare for it. Say what ye will, if ye are careful in preparing for death, ye have not the full faith of this truth, that ye shall die. Believe not every one that thinketh he believeth that he shall die, that believeth it indeed. And O how dreadful is it to an unprepared man to meet with death ? He that thinketh not to die, yea, he would give a world for that he should live. But die must he, whether he will or not : for death cannot be avoided.

be requested, to spare a little when he cometh ; therefore I say unto you all, *Set your house in order, for ye shall surely die; Old men and women, set your house in order, for ye must die; Young men and women, set your house in order, for to morrow ye may die, and be cut off in the flower of your age* , Think not that there is any who can sell time: for I say, ye shall never get it sold unto you. Alace, I fear the most part of persons that dieth now, death findeth them at unawares; indeed the persons that die among us when we go to visit them, we may give you a sad account of them , for we think they are comprehended under three four sorts,

First, When we go to visit some persons on their death bed, they are like unto *Nabal, their heart is hard and sinking (like unto a stone) within them*; they are no more affected with death, then if it were a far-thing; Alace, for the great stupidity that hath overtaken them; Therefore I intreat you delay not your repentance till death, lest the Lord take away your wit, so that ye cannot then repent for your senselessness and stupidity of spirit.

A second sort we find in a presumptuous frame, they are confident; They have had a good hope all their days, and they will not quite it now; they will go down to the grave with their hope in their right hand; or rather they will go down to the grave *with a lie in their right hand*; they live in a presumptuous frame, and they are in the same delusion. For when we tell them that there is no probability they are going down to hell, they say, God forbid, I was all my time a very honest man, or woman: But I love not that confession, for there are many such honest men and women in hell this day.

The third sort we find, having some convictions that they have been playing the fool all their days; but we cannot get them no further; I shall only say to such,

to

to go down to the grave with convictions in breast, not making use of Christ, is to go down with a candle in their hand to let them see the truly the greater part that die, die in this manner.

4. Fourthly, There are some whom we find in a self-righteous frame, tossing upon the Covenant Works and their own merits, & trusting by them to go to heaven; yet neglecting the offer of Christ's righteousness. But, alace, we find not one of a thousand in this frame, *I desire to be dissolved, & be with Christ, the best of all*; And scarce do we find any in such a plight, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Therefore I say unto you all that are here, O will ye mind death before it take hold of you. Oh mind your work now; for ye will find death shall be work enough for it self, though ye do no work till then.

VIII. The eight advantage that attendeth the Christian in believing this truth, that once he must die, this, death will not be so terrible to him as it is to many when it cometh. What (think ye) maketh death a *king of terrors*? What maketh many to shake like a leaf of a tree, when they are summoned to appear before Gods Tribunal? It is even because of this, that we have not been thinking on death before it came to prepare for it, and I fear many in this place will be scared for death, and that when it cometh to them they will say unto death, as *Ahab* said to *Elijah*, *thou found me, O mine enemy*? Surely, death will take you and bring you to the judgement seat of Christ; therefore study by all means to think often upon it; make ready for it; For (believe me) death is a big word, for it will once make you stand with terror in your souls, if your peace be not made up with God; I know not a more dreadful dispensation than death and a guilty conscience meeting together.

the second thing that I shall speak unto from this observation (*viz. This is a most certain and infallible truth, and all persons shall once see death*) shall be to show you some considerations for pressing you to prepare for death.

The first consideration is this, *That to die well, in the Lord, is a most difficult work; therefore I exhort you to prepare for death.* It is a difficult work to communicate aright, it is a difficult work to pray aright, and it is a difficult work to confer aright; But I will tell you, it is a more difficult work to die aright, than any of these. It is true, it is more difficult to communicate aright, than to pray aright, yet it is much more difficult to die aright, than to communicate aright. For it is a most difficult work to die in the Lord. Death will put the most accurate Christian that is here to a wonderful search; and therefore I will tell you of things that death will try in thee. 1. Death will try both the reality and strength of thy Faith, it may be easie for thee to keep up faith under many afflictions, but death shall put thy faith to the greatest stress that ever it did meet with. Yea, know this, the faith of the strongest Believer may get (and commonly doth get) a set at death, the like whereof he never got before, therefore prepare for death. Death will try thy Love to God, some persons profess much love to him, but death will propose this question to such a person, *Lovest thou him more then thyself? Lovest thou him more then thy wife? more then thy children? more then thy friends?* But your unwillingness to answer hath us much ground to fear that many have little love to Christ, but much to the world, and so dare not answer the question, *Lord thou knowest I love thee.* Death will try thine enjoyments, some of you may be ready to think that ye meet with many enjoyments, but ye might reckon (as you think) to forty enjoyments.

joyments and sweet outlettings; but beware that death bring them not down to twenty. I have known some who thought they had met forty times with God, but when death came, it made them take down the count to the half; therefore seeing death will try the reality of thine enjoyments, O prepare for it. 4. Death will try thy patience. Thou may seem to have much patience now, but when death cometh (and thou art put to die) it will put thy patience to a great tryal, therefore prepare for it. 5. Death will try the reality of thy duties, yea even these duties wherein thou had most satisfaction, as thy communicating aright in such a place, thou hopest that is sure: thy reading the Scripture at such a time aright, thou hopest that is sure; thou prayed at such a time aright, and hopest that is sure; thou meditated in such a place aright, and hopest that is sure. But (believe me) death may make thee change thy thoughts; for there are some persons who have communicated, and prayed, &c. as right as any in this generation, who (for all that) will not find six duties wherein they can find satisfaction at death. Therefore our need is great to prepare for it. 6. Death will exceedingly try thy sincerity when it cometh; An hypocrite may go all alongs his whole way undiscovered, yet death may bring him to light, and make appear what man he is. 7. Death will discover unto thee many hid and secret sins, of which thou never had a thought before, yea; albeit thou thought they had been forgotten, death will let thee see them standing between thee and the light of his countenance. 8. Death will accurately try thy Mortification; for thou think they have come a great length in mortification, but (believe me) death will try it, and put it to the touch-stone. 9. Death will try thy hope, whether be real or not. I shall only say this, that all the other graces must low the sails to Faith, and so it is, Faith

must carry us thorow , being that last triumphing grace, which must fit the field for us , when all the other graces will faint and ly by. It is Faith that must enter us fairly within the borders of eternity ; It is Faith must gainstand all the temptations of death, yea, all the other graces must (as it were) stand by, and see Faith strike the last stroak in this war.

II. The second consideration to press you to mind death, is this, that ye are to die but once, O labour to do that well, which ye are to do but once , and the wrong doing of which can never be helped. If ye pray not aright, ye may get that mended ; if ye meditate not aright, ye may get that mended; and if ye communicate not aright, ye may get that also mended; but alace, if ye die not aright, there is no mending of that; Therefore, O prepare for death, that ye may die well , seeing ye are to die but once.

III. The third consideration to press you to mind death, is this, That they are pronounced blessed who die in the Lord, *Rev. 14. 13. Blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord.* O let that provoke you to prepare for death, that so you may die in the Lord, that is the only way to make you eternally happy. I confess it is a question difficult to determine, whether it be more difficult to die well, or to live well; I shall not answer it, but rather desire you to study both.

IV. The fourth consideration to press you to prepare for death, is this, *viz.* That though thou put all thy work by thy hand before death , yet shalt thou find that death shall have work enough for it self, yea, as much as thou shalt get done. It will then be much for thee to win to patience, it will be much for thee to win to the sight of thy Justification: and it will then be much for thee to win to assurance. O then is it not needful for thee to put all thy work by thy hand before thy latter end come ? Wherefore I may say to

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you as *Moses* said in his Song, *Deut.* 32. 29. *O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!* O that ye had this piece of divine wisdom! I pray you consider that sad word, *Lam.* 1. 19. *She remembreth not her last end, and what of it? therefore she came down wonderfully.* So wil the down-coming of many in this generation be wonderful, who consider not their last end.

V. The fifth consideration for pressing you to prepare for death, is this, *viz.* That their labour shal end, but their work shall not be forgotten, as is clear from that forecited place, *Rev.* 11. 13, *They rest from their labours, and their works follow them;* and is not that a glorious advantage?

VI. The sixth consideration to press you to prepare for death, is this, *viz.* That death may come upon you ere ye be aware; ye know not but death may surprise you this night before ye go home to your houses; and therefore let that press you to study a constant preparation for death.

VII. The seventh consideration to press you to prepare for death, is this, *viz.* that as death leaveth you, so will judgement find you; if death shall leave you strangers to Christ, ye shall appear before him strangers unto him, therefore I intreat you all to prepare for it. I think that noble practice of *Paul* exceeding worthy of imitation, *1 Cor.* 15. 13. *I die daily,* which I think doth comprehend these three things; 1. That *Paul* had death always in his sight. 2. It comprehendeth this, that he endeavoured to keep such a frame as every moment he should be ready to die, so that whensoever death should put the summons in his hand, he should be content to answer. 3. It comprehendeth this, that he laboured to lay aside & remove all things out of the way, that might detain him from laying down his tabernacle. O saith *Paul*, I labour so to clear

clear my self of all hinderances, as that when ever I shall be summoned to remove out of time, I may willingly lay down my life. Therefore I would ask you this question, *viz.* When shall you make your last testament? I think it were suitable for us to be renewing our latter will every day, for in so doing, *Paul* made an excellent testament, the better of which none that died since, have made, *2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith;* these are very sweet articles: and then he addeth, *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day.* And think ye not that very sweet, that he would leave something unto you in Christs Name, *viz.* And that not for me only, but for all them that wait for his appearance. Now I come to the third thing proposed, *viz.* to give some directions for helping you to prepare for death.

Direct. 1. I intreat you be much in preparation for death every day, for it is even a preparation for heaven, to be taking a sight of your grave and latter end every day.

Direct. 2. I intreat you be much in these duties, First, in self-examination; that your counts may be clear with God; for many a ragged count shall we have when death and we shall meet. Secondly, be much in the exercise of repentance, that so ye may have every fault and corruption in you mourned for, before death and you meet. Thirdly, be much in the exercise of Faith, *making your calling and election sure.* Fourthly, Be much in the exercise of Mortification, and that will help you to keep a loose grip, not only of the world, but also of your other idols; and if ye be much in these, ye shall undoubtedly be prepared for death.

Direct. 3. Be much in minding the excellent things
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of heaven. A Christian that would be prepared for death, would have all his thoughts and conversation there. I think it would be an excellent help (in preparation for death) to take a sight of the crown every day.

Direct. 4. Labour always to keep a good conscience void of offence toward God and men : I say labour to keep thy conscience clear, and that shall be a continual feast unto thee.

Direct. 5. Slight not thy known duty, do not crucifie any conviction, neither break any resolution : put these three together, and that will exceedingly help you to prepare for death: I say, see that ye adventure not to slight any known duty; see that ye adventure not to crucifie any conviction, and see that ye adventure not to break your resolutions.

Now we come to the second thing which we observed from the words, *viz.* That this truth, that we shall once see death, is not much believed by any of us. And to make this appear, we shall only give some Evidences unto you, to prove that we are not as yet prepared for death.

I. Evidence, Doth not the unspeakable stupidity that hath overtaken many, say, that we are not a people prepared for death? Alas, many of us would find our selves in a most stupid temper, if we were presently to die; for many of us are no more moved with the threatenings & terrors of God, then if they did not belong unto us; & this faith, we are not as yet prepared for death.

II. Evidence, That we are not prepared for death, is our pursuing so much after vain and passing delights in a present world. Many of us, Rise up early, and go to bed at night, and eateth the bread of sorrow all the day; loadeth themselves with thick clay; And I am sure, that such a person, (being night and day taken up with the world) is not prepared for death. I remember a word

recorded of such a wretched one, who was exceedingly rich, said he, I would give so many thousands of money, if death would give me but one day: yet he got it not. And O how suddenly will death surprise many of you as it did him?

III. *Evidence*, which speaketh forth our unpreparedness for death, is our impatience under every petty cross that we meet with; for the prepared Christian will be patient under very sharp crosses.

IV. *Evidence*, That we are not prepared, is our not endeavouring to live within sight of our interest in God. Oh if we were prepared for death, durst we live in so much uncertainty of our interest in God, and of our assurance of heaven.

V. *Evidence*, Some of us can let our idols ly in our breast six years without repentance, and will never study to mortify them, nor to repent for them; and surely such are not prepared for death.

Now I intreat you seriously to mind what hath been said; And that ye may the more seriously think upon it, I will tell you some material challenges that your consciences at death will present unto you, therefore take heed, that ye may know how ye will answer.

I. *Challenge*, Is the slighting of much precious time, and singling away the precious offers of grace. O what will ye answer to that challenge when death shall present it to you, Death will say (or rather thine own conscience at death) what ailed thee to sin so many hours without either praying, reading, or meditating? Now have ye any thing to answer when death shall present this challenge to you? I intreat you premeditate what ye will say: I intreat you, prevent death by presenting it first seriously to your selves.

2. *Challenge*, That death will present unto you, will be for the killing of many precious convictions which we have had. What will each of you answer at death,
when

when your conscience proposeth this challenge unto you? Thou met with such a challenge at such a time, and went home and crucified it; when at another time, thou met with another challenge, and went home and crucified it; These challenges will be laid home to thy door, therefore think on them.

3. *Challenge*, Death will challenge you for a formal hypocritical way of going about duties. I say your conscience will then tell you that ye went to such a communion with a selfish end; and at another time, ye prayed hypocritically and formally. And what will ye have to answer when ye meet with these challenges? I confess I know not what ye can answer to these, but I charge you, be thinking what ye will answer, for it may be that these convictions shall lay on your consciences, that even this day ye have heard two searching Sermons, and did meet with some convictions, but made no good use of them; yea, and it may be ye did sleep all the time. O what will ye answer, when it shall be said to you, ye went to such a Sermon, and slept all the time: and ye went to such a communion; but had no other end before your eyes, but to be seen of men: I intreat you consider presently what ye will answer to these.

4. *Challenge*, Will be for your breaking of many precious resolutions, It will be said to some of you, that at the communion in this place ye took on vows and did break them: I am sure ye cannot question the justice of this challenge; therefore see what ye will answer.

5. *Challenge*, Ye slighted many precious offers of the Gospel. O men and women in this City, what will ye answer to this? I was often exhorted to take Christ, and yet would never take him. What will conscience say to that, when death shall table it before you? I tell you what ye must then answer: O cursed I, that ever

I refused Christ in the Gospel. And ye shall then be confounded, because this is your sin; Believe me, there was never an offer of this everlasting Gospel, and of Christ in it, made unto you, that shall not at death, (before or after) be brought to your remembrance. And, O how sad and doleful will it be to you, when Christ shall open the Book wherein your sins are written, and begin with the sin of slighting the great salvation? Thus I invited you, when ye were twelve years old: but ye would not come, I invited you when you were thirty years old, and ye would not come. What will ye answer to this? Have ye any thing to say? Or must ye not stand speechless before your Judge, when he shall put home this challenge unto you? Therefore think seriously upon it, how ye will answer to it.

6. *Challenge*, Will be for your sinning oftentimes against light: And O how painful and sad a challenge will that be at the day of death, when it will be said, thou sinnedst with a witness in thy bosome, that thou wast doing wrong: thy conscience will say oftentimes did I tell thee this is sinful, yet wouldst thou not abstain from it; and what wilt ye answer to this?

VII. *Challenge*, Oftentimes ye sinned upon every small temptation, and what will ye answer to that? Must ye not then confess it, and say, O how often would I deserted Christ, and imbraced my idols upon a small temptation? Now I intreat you be thinking what ye will answer to these seven most material Challenges, which certainly shall be presented to you at death. I assure you, ye must either answer all your challenges in Christ, else ye will not get them well answered. Therefore I would exhort you to imbrace the Gospel and Christ in it: that so let death propose never so many challenges unto you, ye may answer them all as David did, viz. *God hath made with me an everlasting Covenant*, (and that will answer all your chal-

challenges) though my house be not so with God yet I have the everlasting Covenant to build my salvation upon.

Now to press you to make use of Christ, I shall give you these four Considerations.

Consideration 1. If ye imbrace not Christ now, Death will be very unpleasant unto you. O what else can comfort thee, when going through the region of the shadow of Death, but this, I am Christs, I am Christs? is there any other thing can comfort thee in that day, but only this, *I am Christs, and he is mine?*

Consideration 2. If ye imbrace not Christ and the great salvation now, it will be an hundred to one if ever ye get time or liberty to do it, when ye are going to die. For although many delay their closing with Christ till death, yet scarcely one of a hundred getteth favour to grip Christ at death; therefore, think on it, for ye will not get your mind so composed at death as ye imagine, nor all things done as ye suppose: therefore now imbrace the great salvation.

Consideration 3. If ye delay your closing with Christ till death seise upon you, ye shal never be able to make up that loss, *For will the dead rise and praise God? Or shall any come from the land of forgetfulness, to take hold upon a crucified Saviour?* Therefore; O will ye take him for your Salvation.

Consideration 4. If ye will take Christ now, he shall be your guide, when ye are going through the valley and shadow of death. And O how blessed is the person that can sing that word, *Psa. 48. 14. This is my God, he will be my guide even unto death.* If ye can sing that pleasant song. O how may ye be comforted, when your eye strings shall begin to break? O how happy is he who can say, *Though I walk through the shadow of death, yet will I fear no ill; for I know the Lord is with me.* Now this is the acceptable day, and the year of Salvation, therefore do not delay, but imbrace Christ, lest death

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surprise you ere ye be aware, and so that acceptable day be lost. But unto these who think they may delay till death, I say, surely there are many damned Atheists in hel that (sometime) did think as ye think: *I will make all wrongs right when death and I shal meet*; I hope that three days repentance will satisfie for all my wrongs; for I am sure, there are many in hell, who did never get three days to think upon their former ways; Therefore, *O Come, come*; and imbrace Christ presently. Now are ye all perswaded of this truth, that ye shall once see death? Then study a tender walking; for (believe me) there are many of us who shall go thorow death with many bruised bones, because of untender walking before God. We know it is not the multitude of words can perswade you to imbrace Christ, for many of you never minded the thing: but (believe me) death will preach these things to you in a more terrible manner then we can do at this time. Therefore I say to each of you, *O prepare to meet thy God*; for, if death find you in an estranged estate from God, I beseech the Angels in Heaven to free you out of that estate, and the day is coming wherein thou shalt cry out, *O sligher of the great salvation that I am, I would give ten thousand worlds for one Sermon again that I once heard, wherein Christ was freely offered to me*, When thou shalt be tormented without hope of remedy; Therefore, *while it is to day harden not your hearts*, for your late wishes shal not be granted (when ye are gone) if we make not haste. *O therefore Haste, haste in time, and come out from the land of your captivity, and from the house of your bondage, and take Christ for your Redeemer*; the guide of your youth and old age. Now unto him, who can lead you thorow all these steps betwixt you and heaven, be eternal praise, Amen.